



US011018897B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Sasaki et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 11,018,897 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** ***May 25, 2021**

(54) **ELECTRONIC CONTROL UNIT, COMMUNICATION METHOD, AND ONBOARD NETWORK SYSTEM**

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **H04L 12/46** (2013.01); **H04L 12/40** (2013.01); **H04L 12/4625** (2013.01); **H04L 67/12** (2013.01); **H04L 2012/40215** (2013.01)

(71) Applicant: **PANASONIC INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CORPORATION OF AMERICA**, Torrance, CA (US)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
None
See application file for complete search history.

(72) Inventors: **Takamitsu Sasaki**, Osaka (JP); **Tomoyuki Haga**, Nara (JP); **Manabu Maeda**, Osaka (JP); **Hideki Matsushima**, Tokyo (JP)

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

7,787,479 B2 8/2010 Matsuo
9,294,590 B2 3/2016 Hwang
(Continued)

(73) Assignee: **PANASONIC INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CORPORATION OF AMERICA**, Torrance, CA (US)

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

JP 2016-111477 6/2016

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

International Search Report of PCT application No. PCT/JP2017/015815 dated Jul. 25, 2017.

Primary Examiner — Brian S Roberts

(21) Appl. No.: **16/872,881**

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Greenblum & Bernstein, P.L.C.

(22) Filed: **May 12, 2020**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

US 2020/0274737 A1 Aug. 27, 2020

An electronic control unit connected to a bus of a first network where first-type frames are transmitted following a first communication protocol and a second network where second-type frames are transmitted following a second communication protocol in an onboard network system. The electronic control unit sequentially receives the first-type and the second-type frames from the bus and the second network respectively, and stores in first and second reception buffers, respectively. The electronic control unit sequentially generates first-type data and second-type data by referencing the contents of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, and stores the first-type and second-type data in first and second transmission buffers, respectively. The first-type data is traveling control data for a vehicle, and the second-type data is other data. The first-type or second-

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 16/188,328, filed on Nov. 13, 2018, now Pat. No. 10,693,675, which is a (Continued)

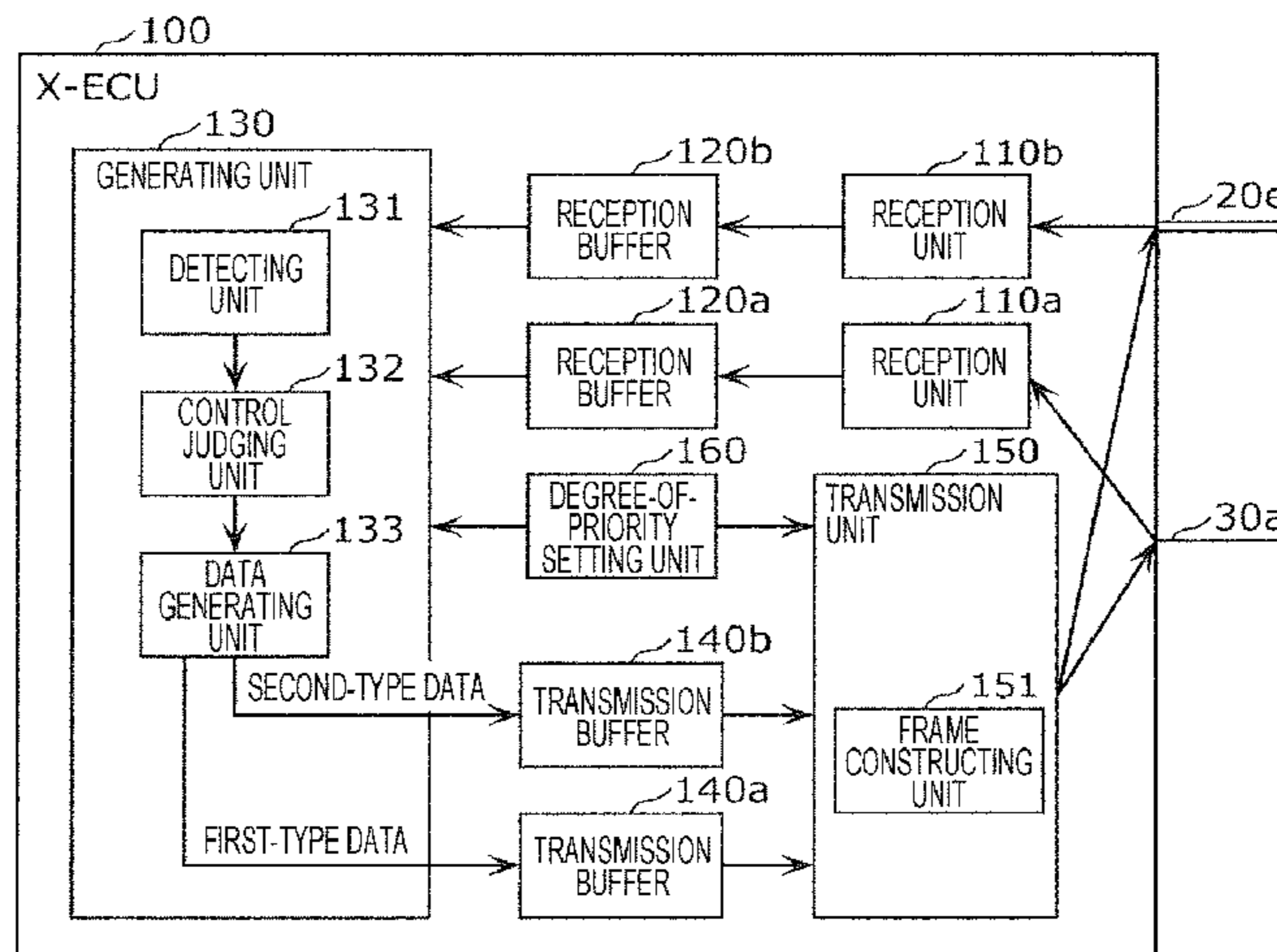
(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Mar. 27, 2017 (JP) JP2017-061874

(51) **Int. Cl.**

H04L 12/46 (2006.01)
H04L 12/40 (2006.01)
H04L 29/08 (2006.01)

(Continued)



type data that is priority type data is transmitted with priority.

18 Claims, 23 Drawing Sheets

Related U.S. Application Data

continuation of application No. PCT/JP2017/015815, filed on Apr. 20, 2017.

(60) Provisional application No. 62/342,536, filed on May 27, 2016.

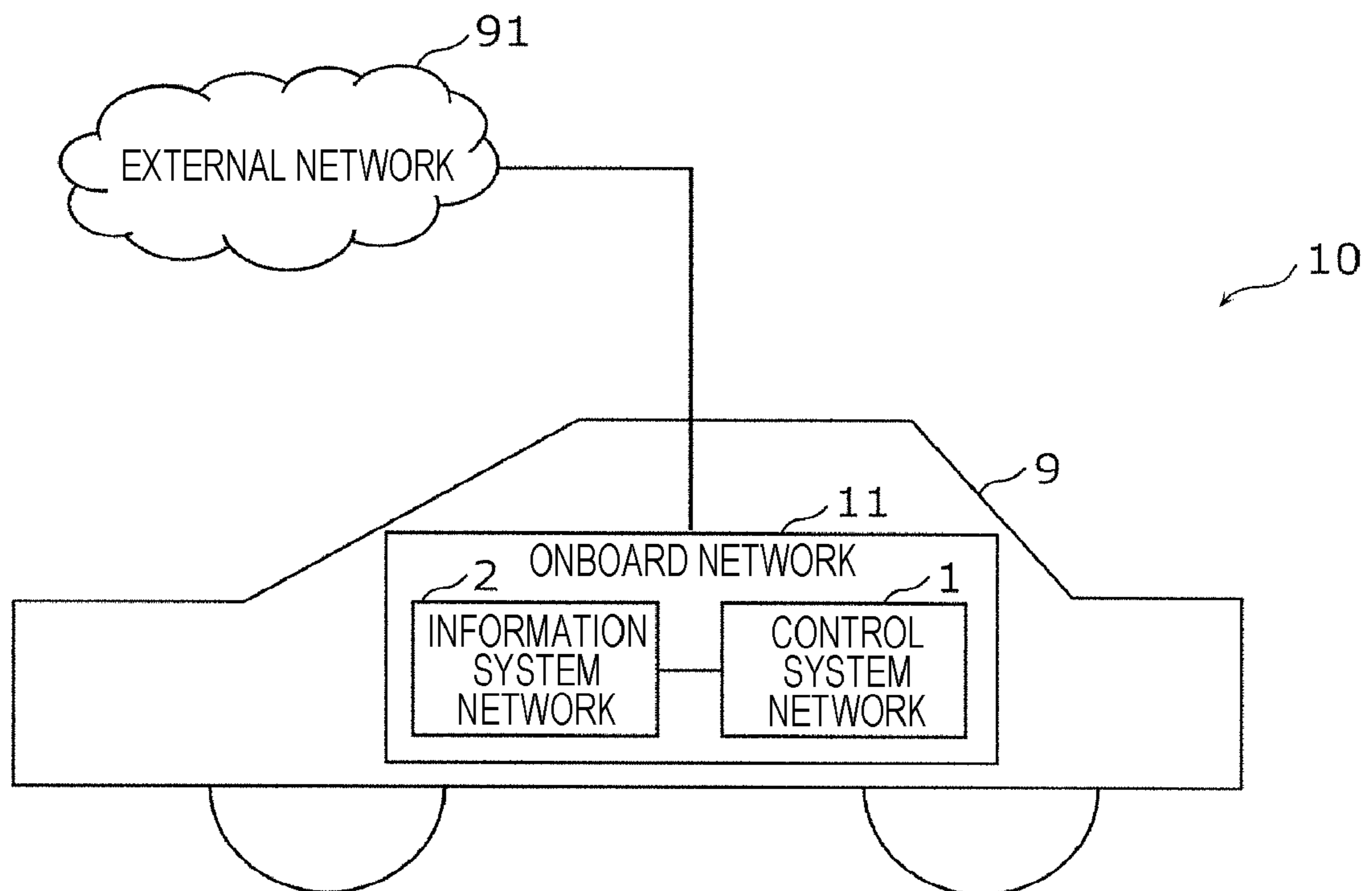
(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

10,021,041	B2	7/2018	Yousefi	
10,693,675	B2 *	6/2020	Sasaki H04L 12/46
2011/0167147	A1	7/2011	Andersson	
2013/0073764	A1	3/2013	Deb	
2013/0204466	A1	8/2013	Ricci	
2014/0023068	A1	1/2014	Kim	
2016/0080533	A1	3/2016	Jeon	
2016/0294707	A1	10/2016	Chen	

* cited by examiner

FIG. 1



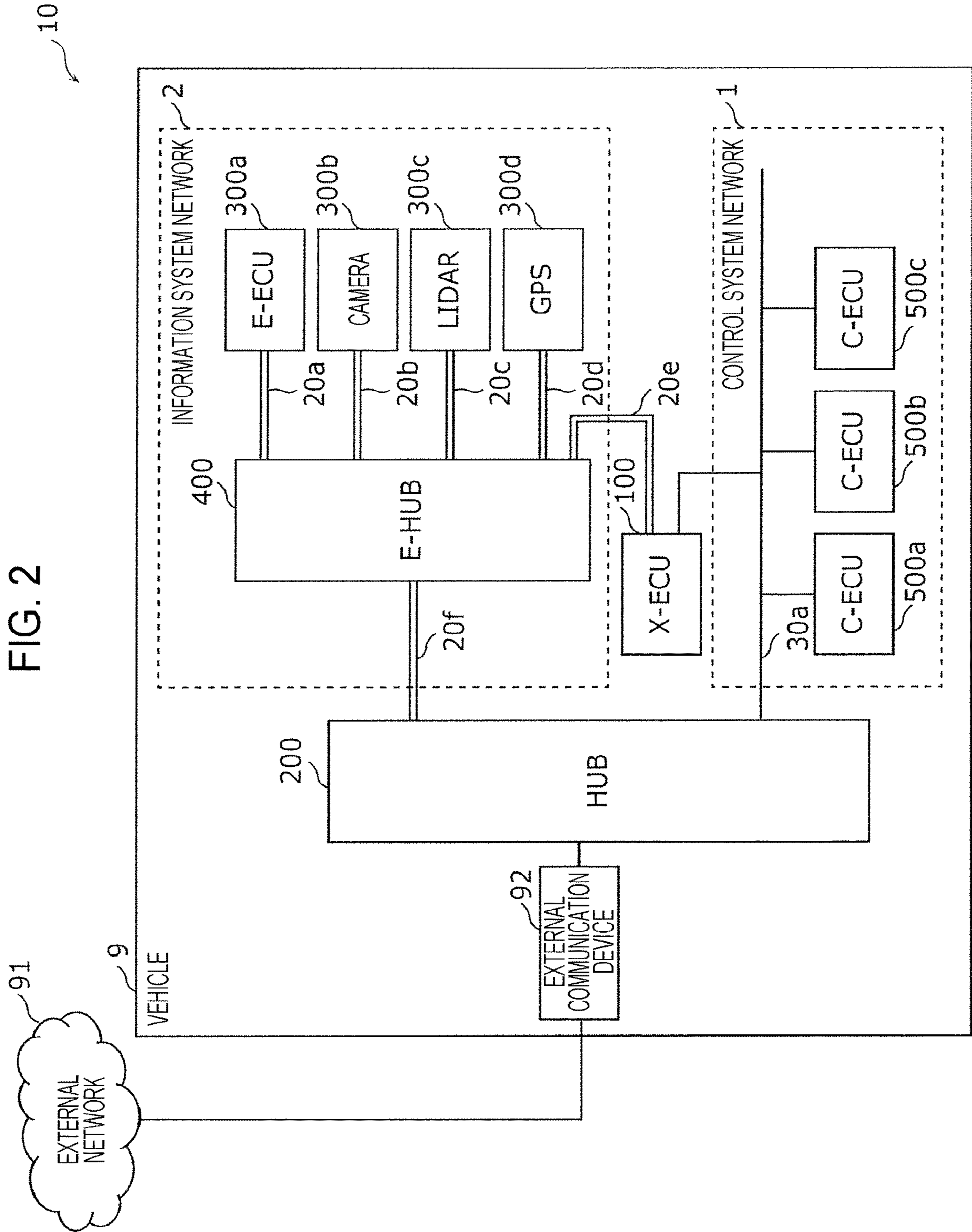


FIG. 3A

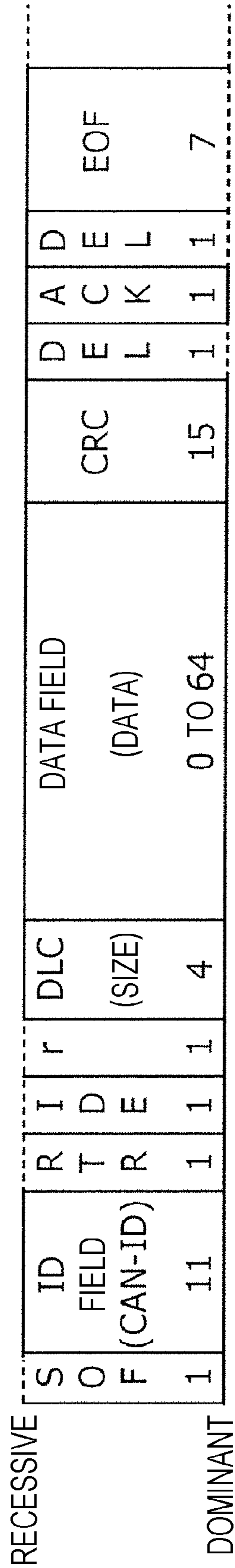


FIG. 3B

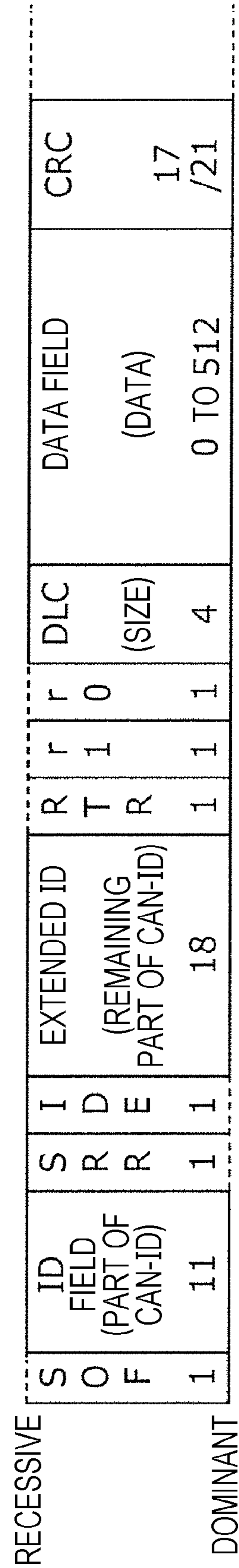


FIG. 4

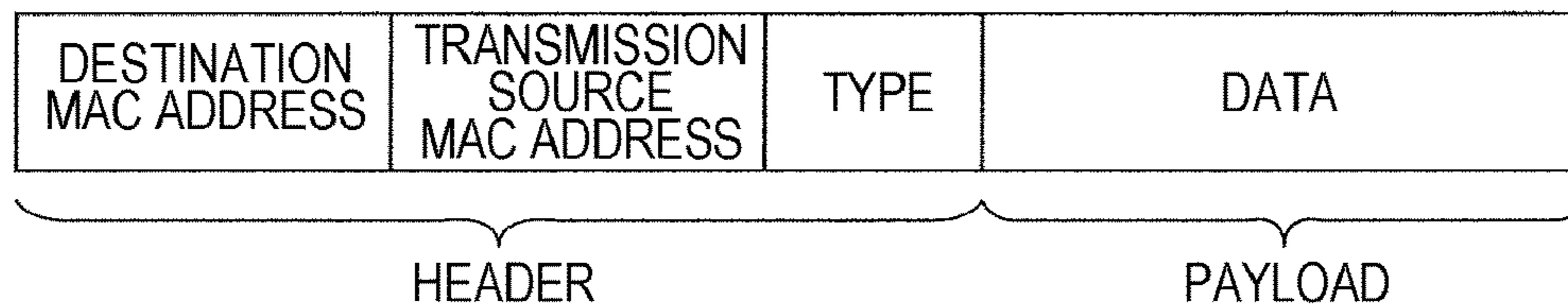


FIG. 5

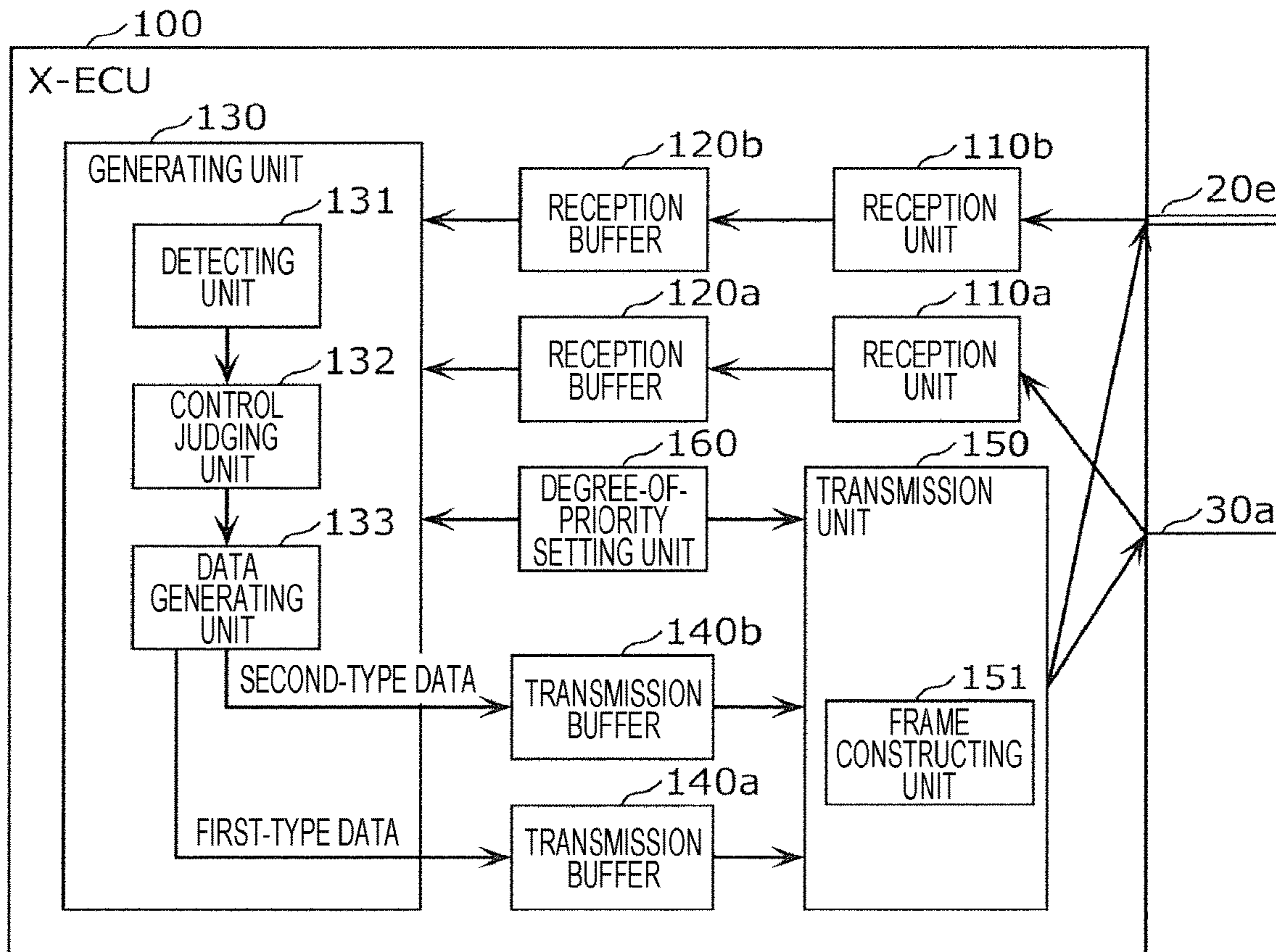


FIG. 6

RECEPTION ID LIST
0x100
0x101
0x102
0x200
⋮

FIG. 7

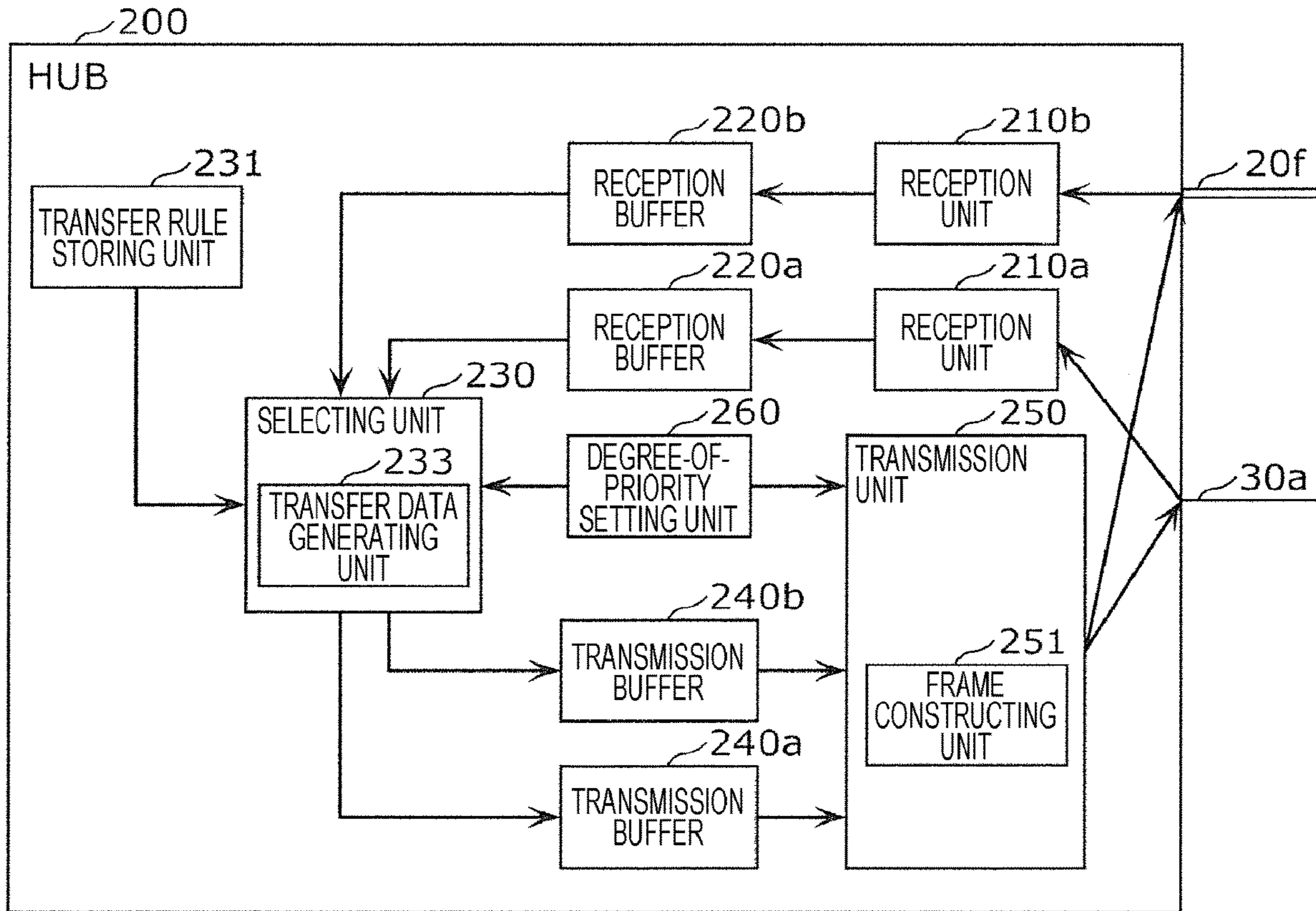


FIG. 8

TRANSFER SOURCE	TRANSFER DESTINATION
CAN BUS 1 (CAN-ID: 0x100, 0x101)	MAC ADDRESS:00:11:22:33:44:55
CAN BUS 1 (CAN-ID: 0x102)	MAC ADDRESS:00:12:23:34:45:56
MAC ADDRESS:00:11:22:33:44:55	CAN BUS 1 (CAN-ID: 0x300)
MAC ADDRESS:00:12:34:56:78:90	CAN BUS 1 (CAN-ID: 0x400)
⋮	⋮

FIG. 9

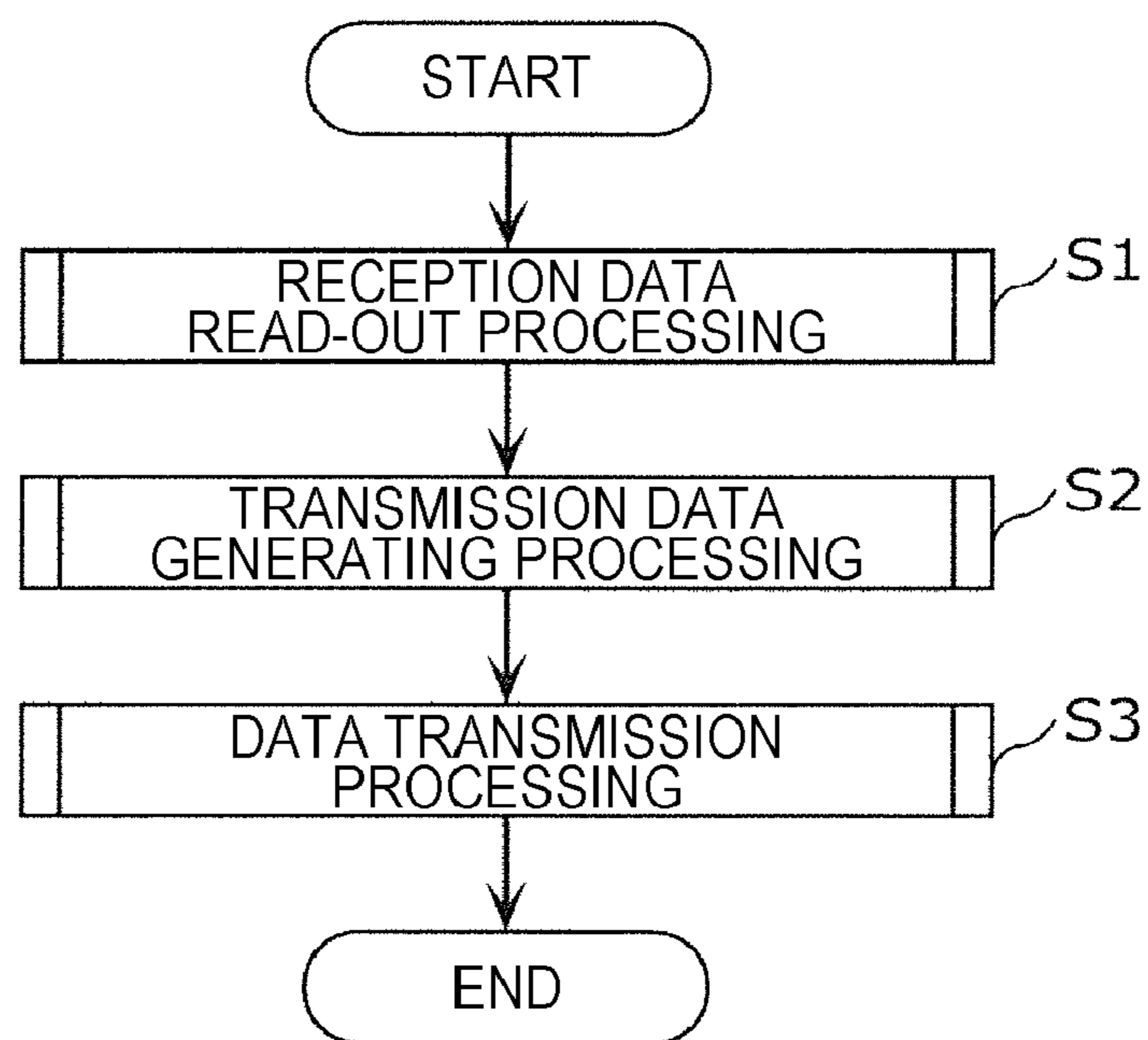


FIG. 10

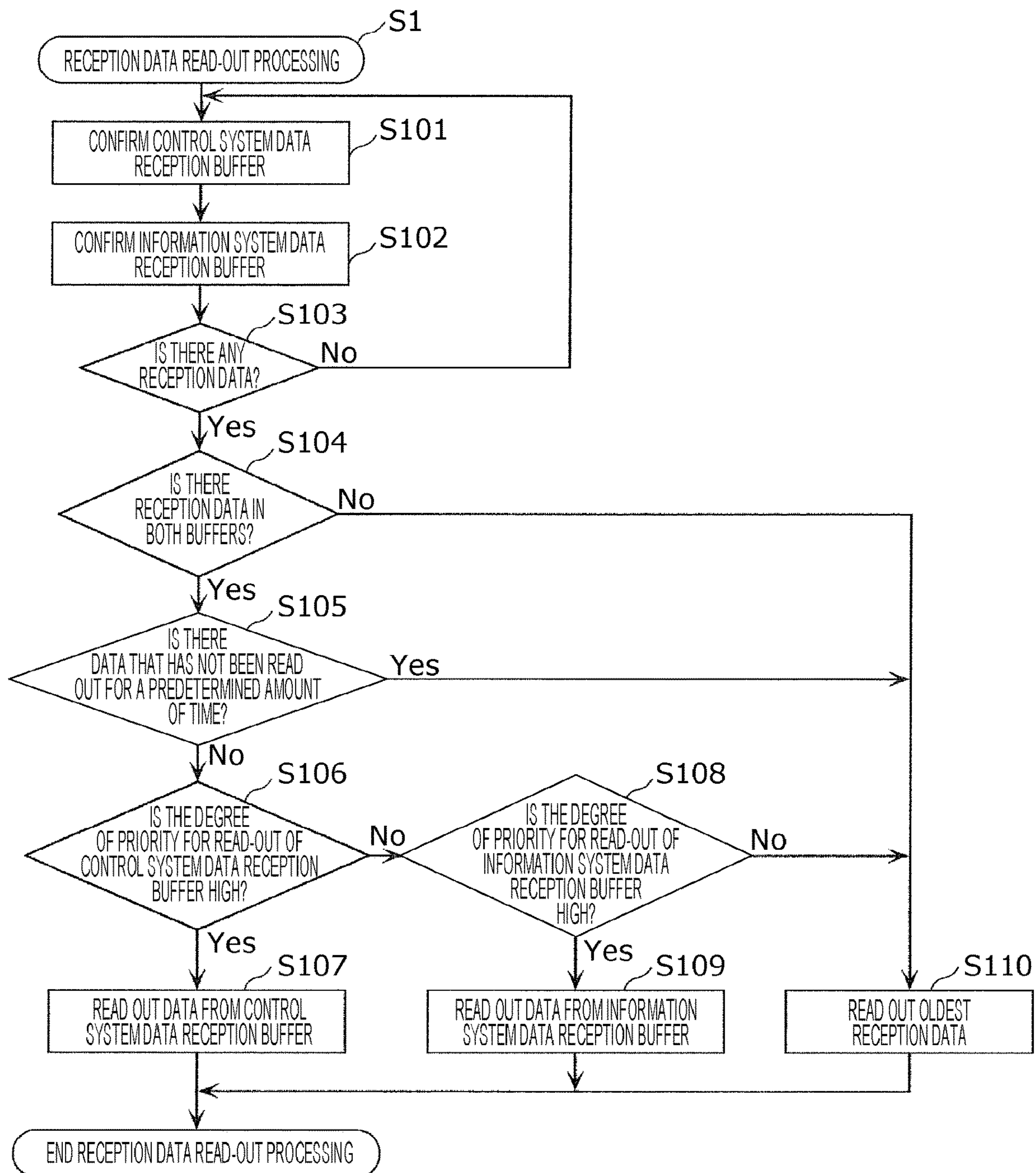


FIG. 11

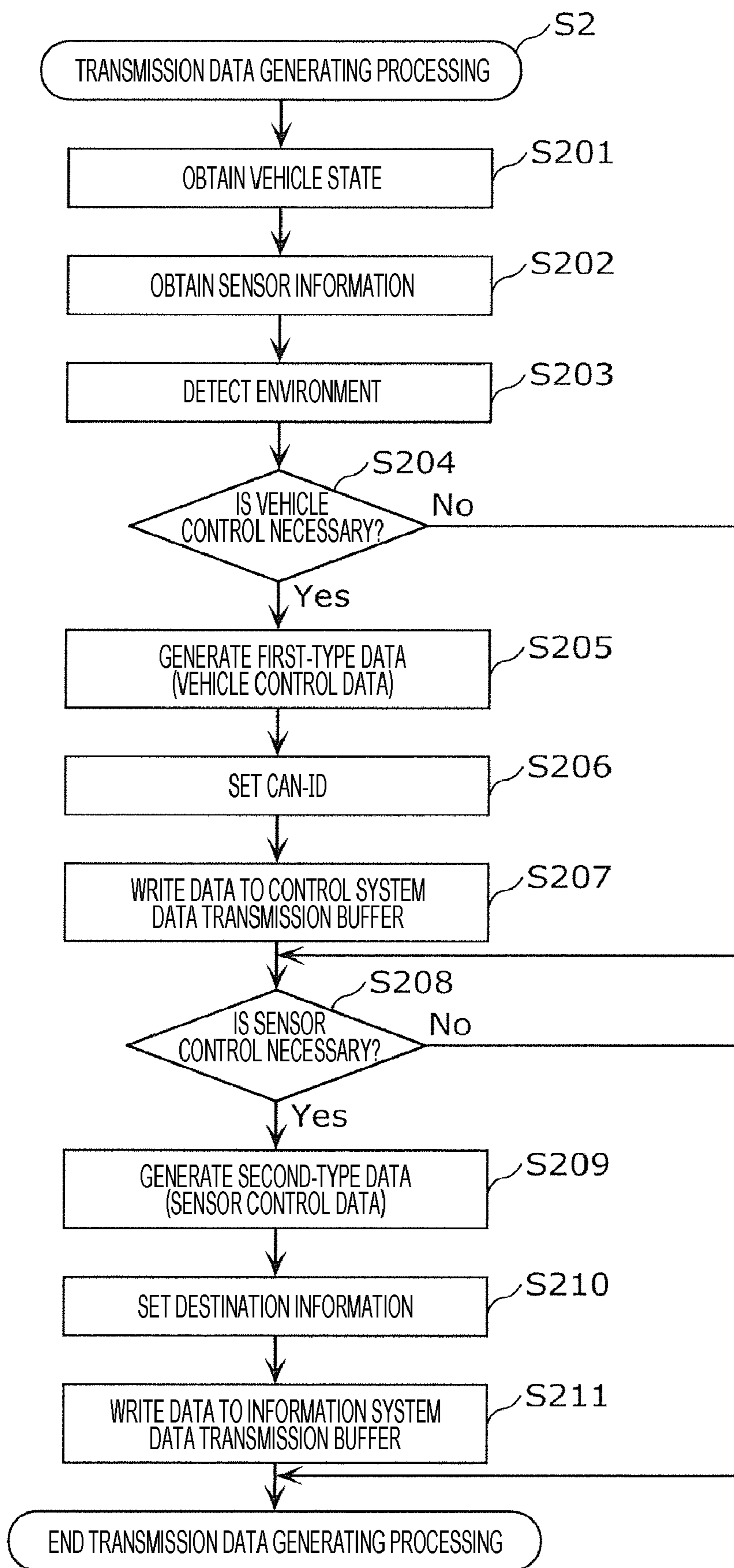


FIG. 12

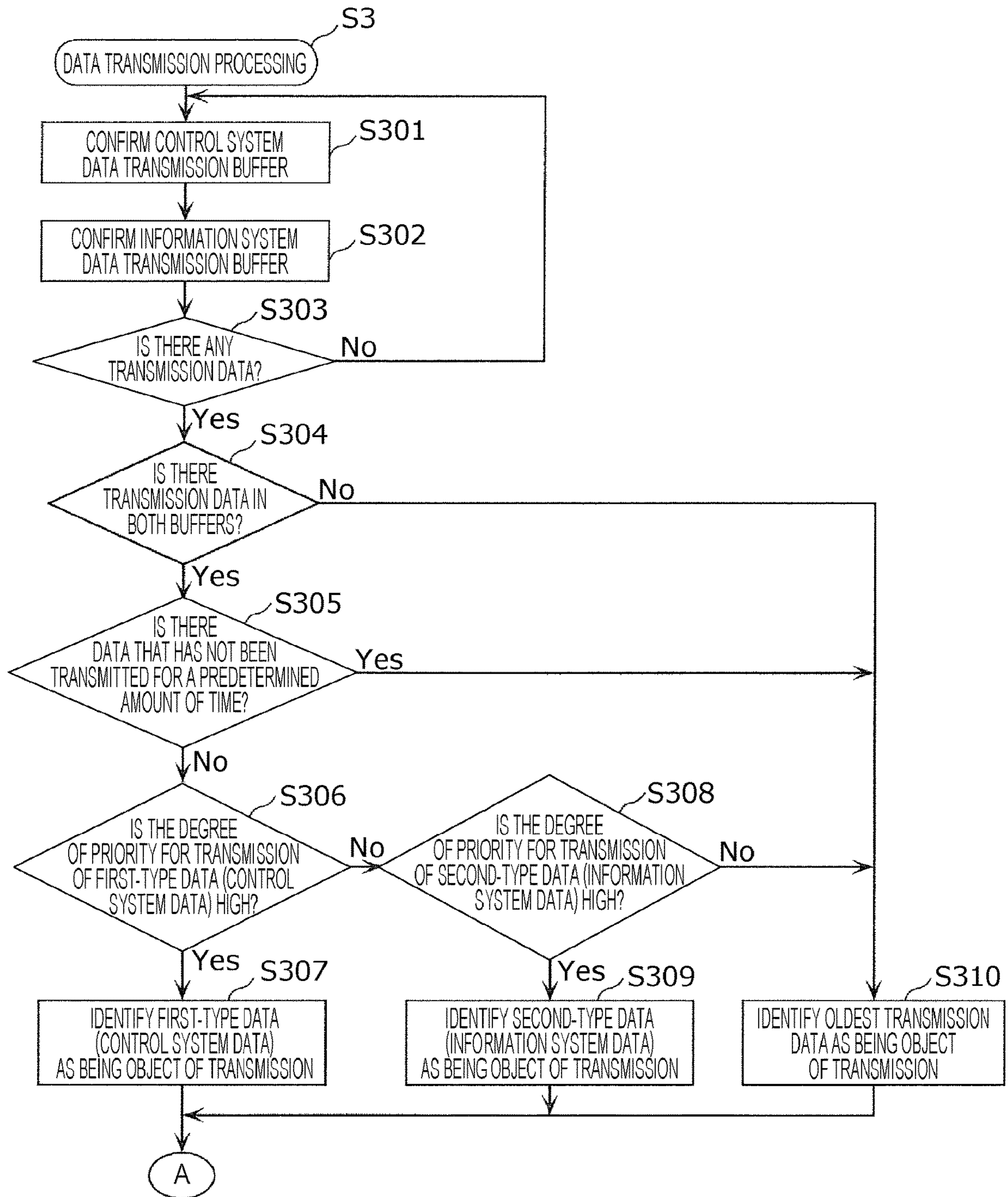


FIG. 13

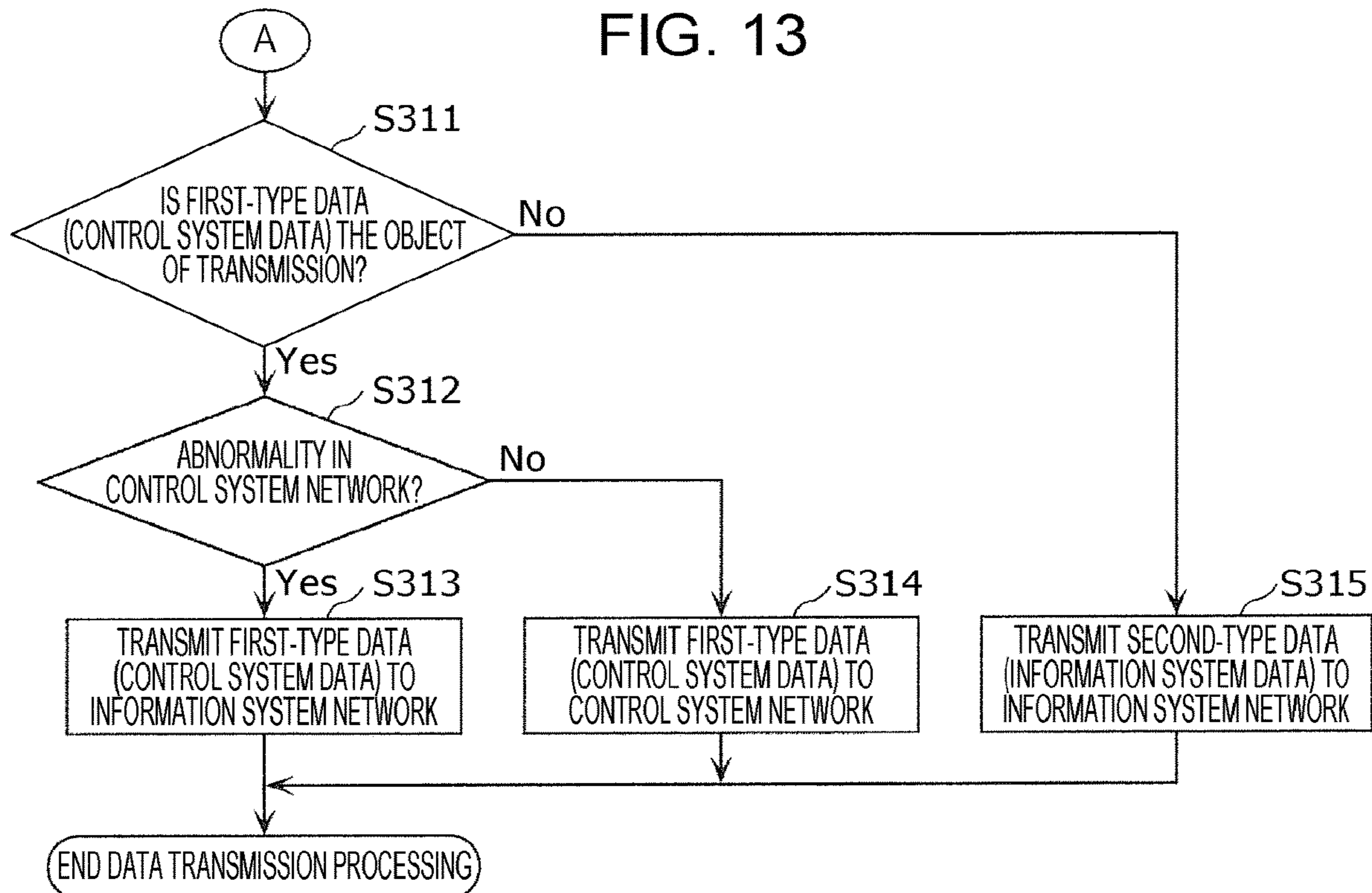


FIG. 14

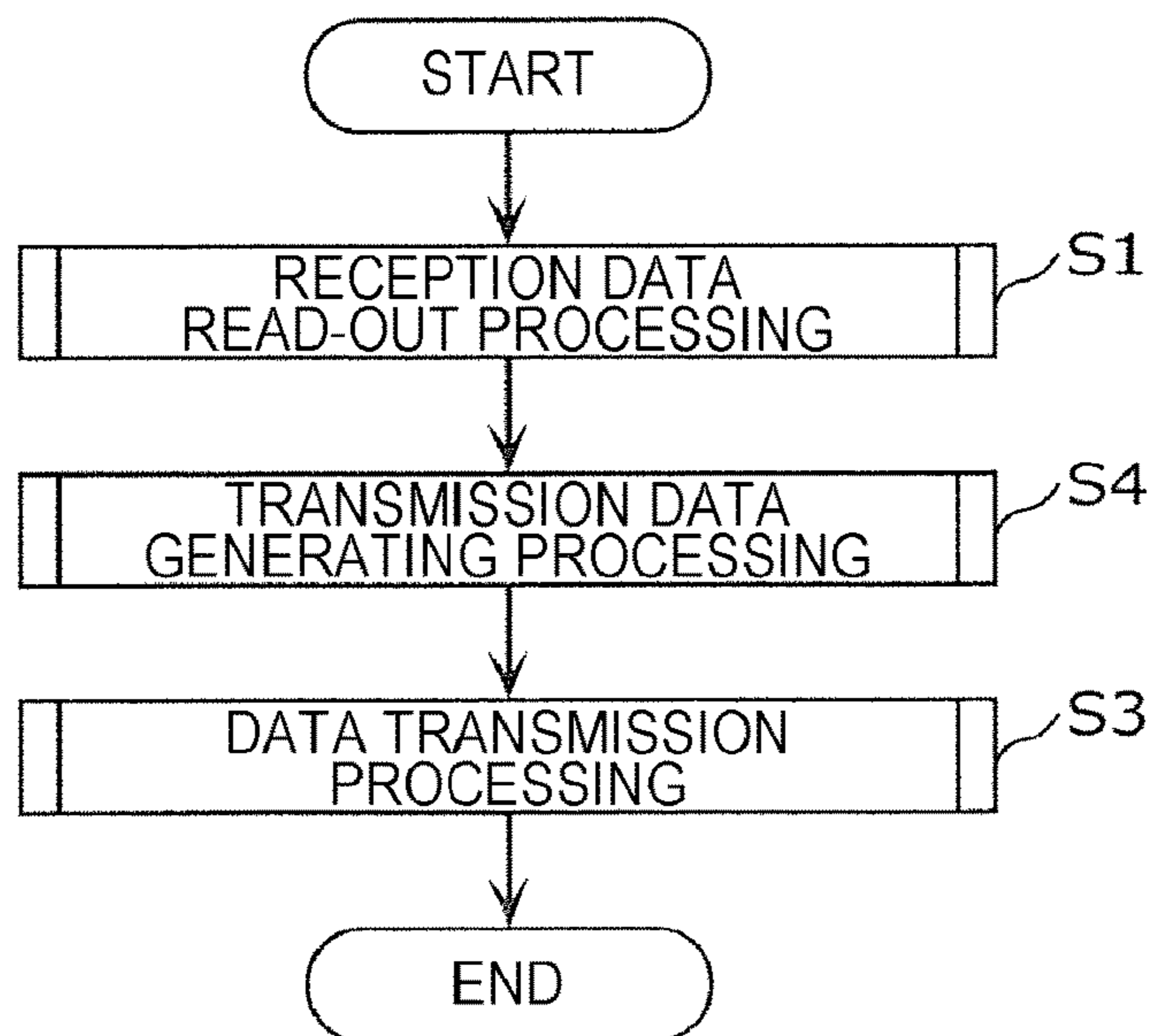


FIG. 15

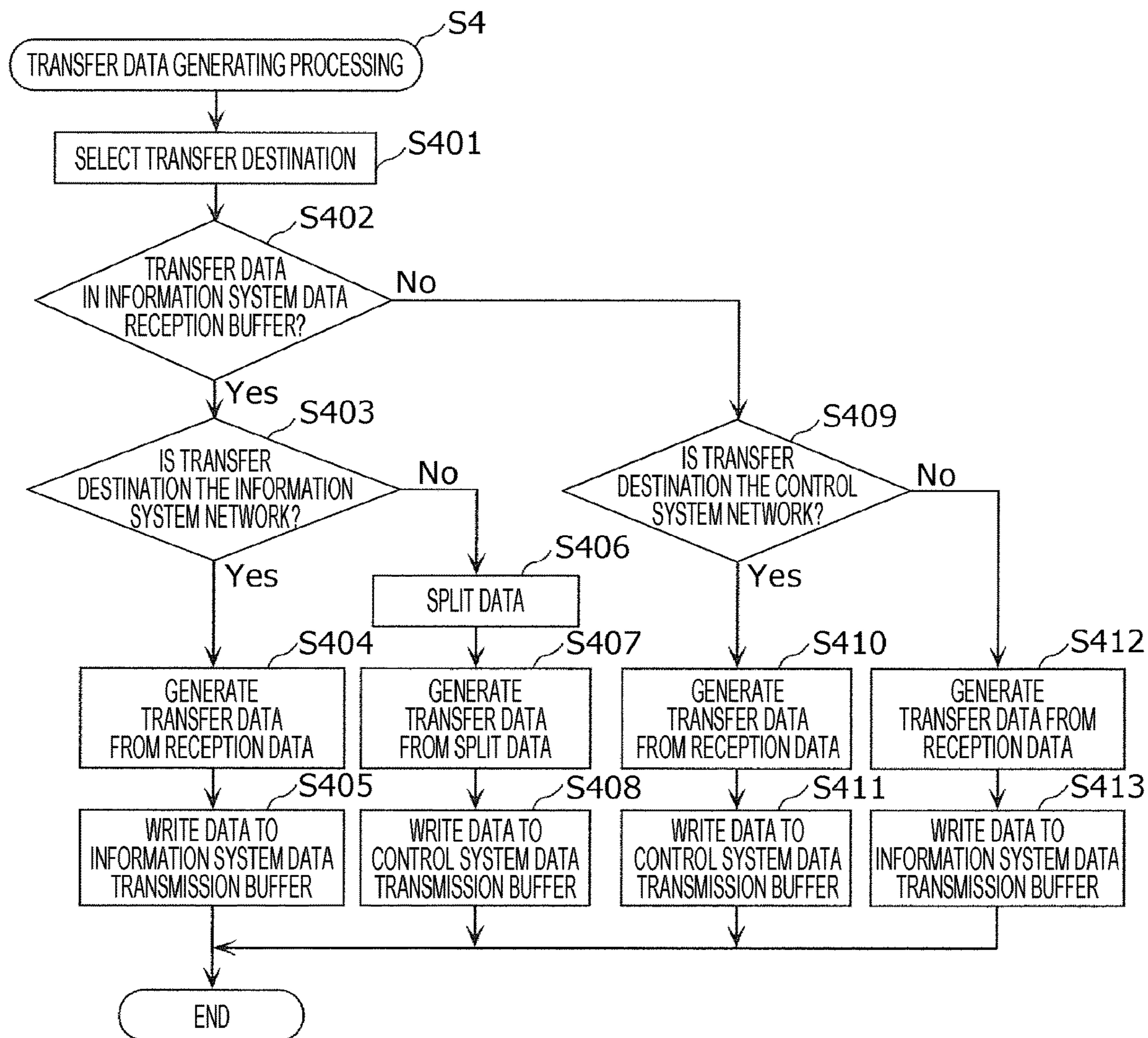


FIG. 16

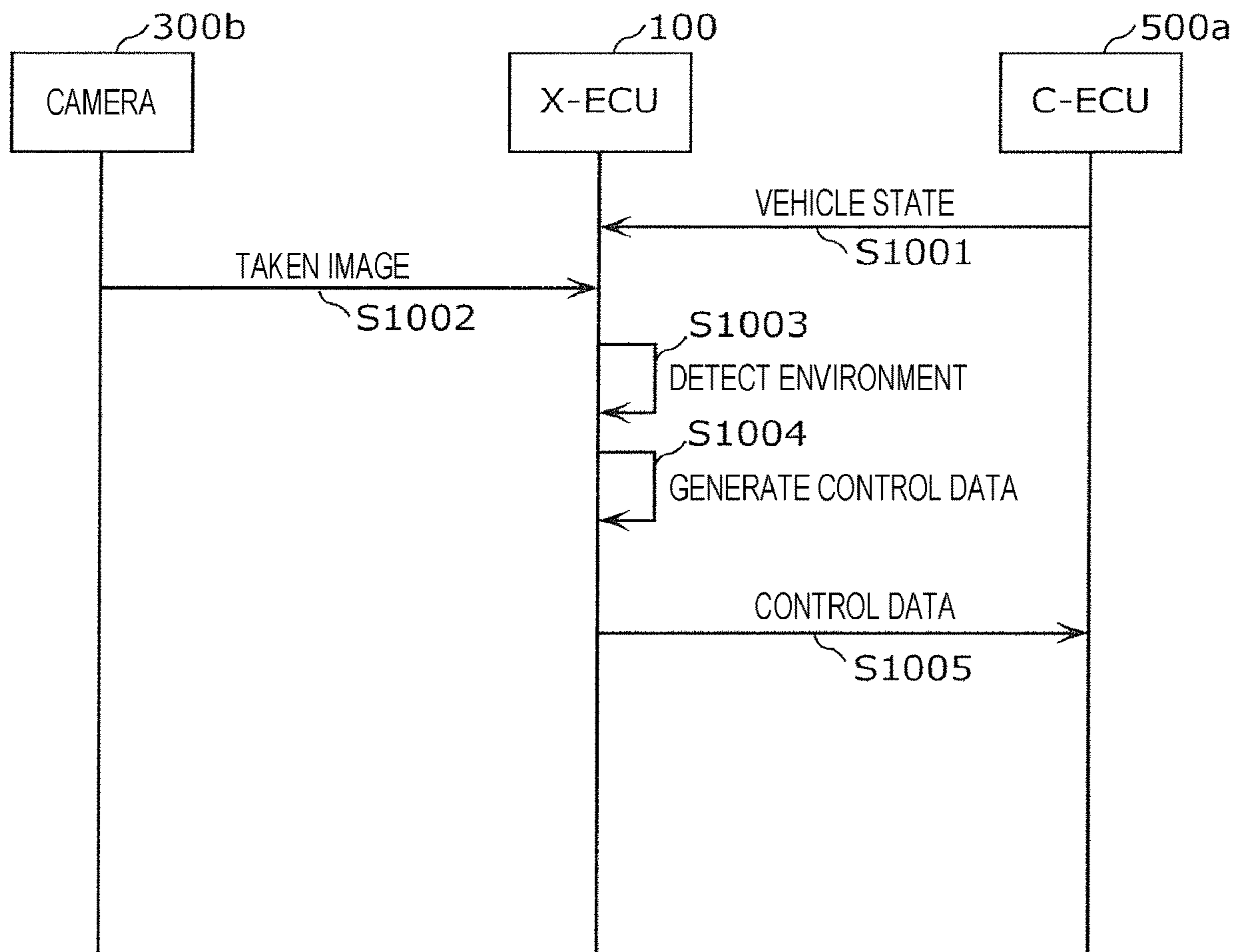


FIG. 17

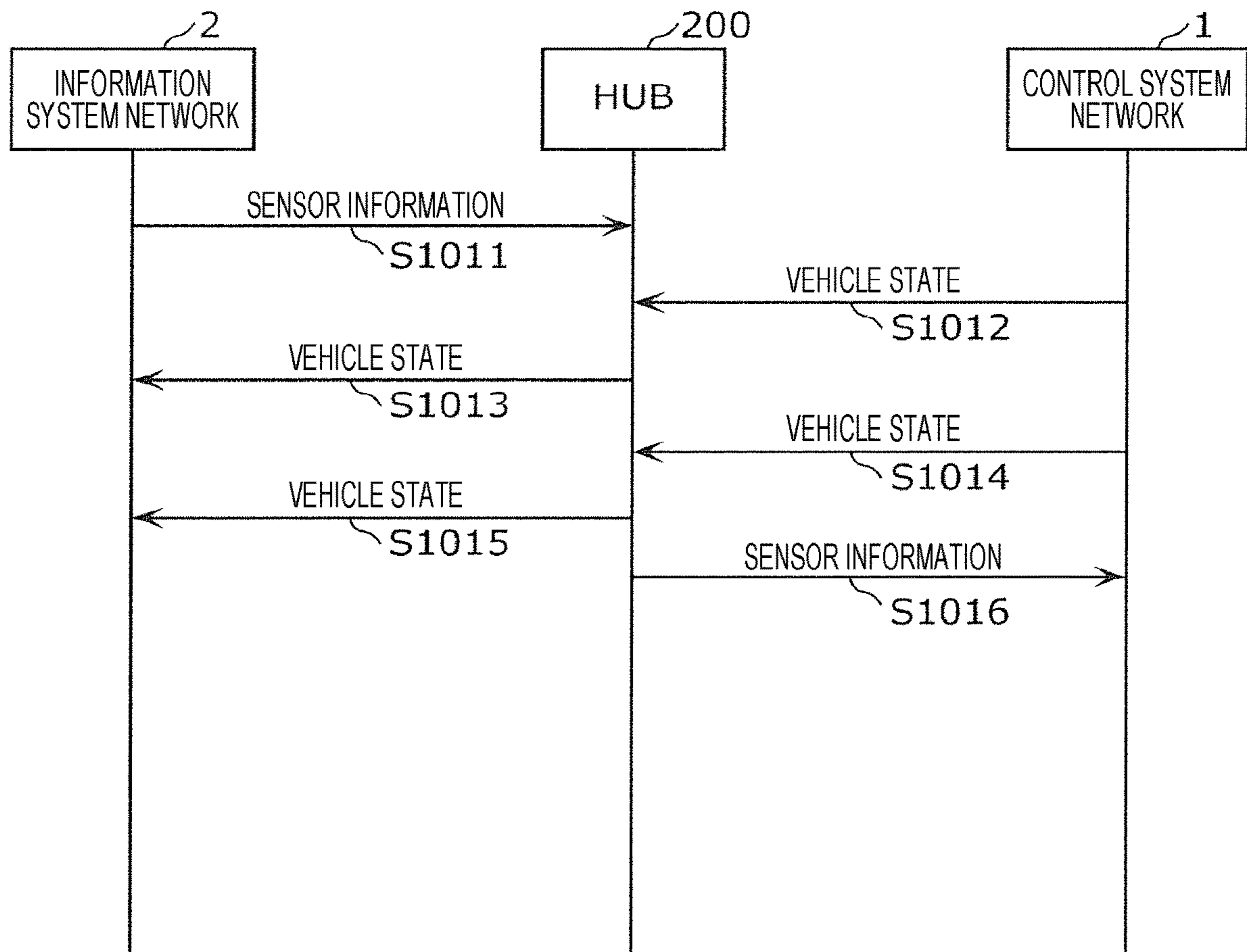


FIG. 18

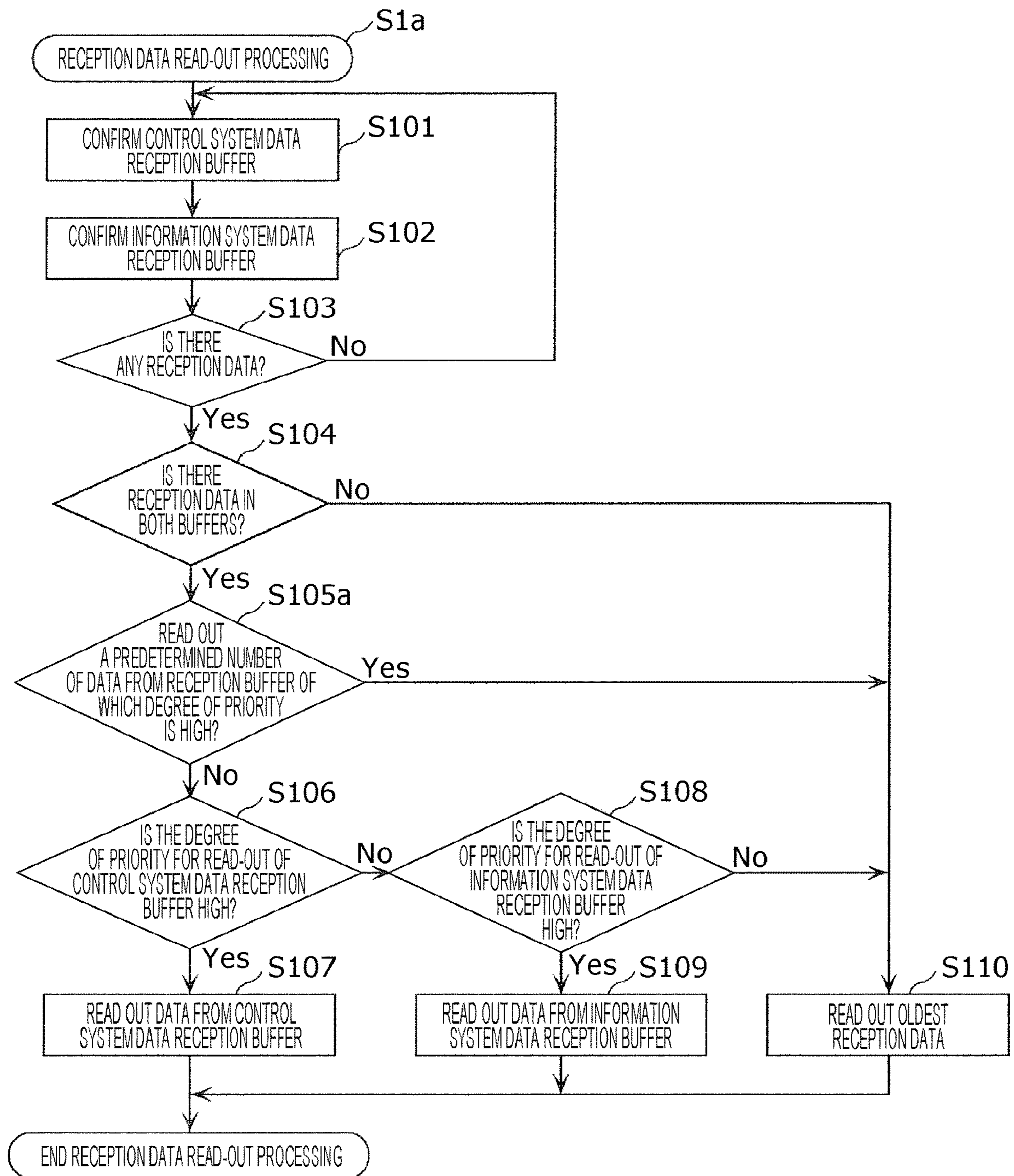
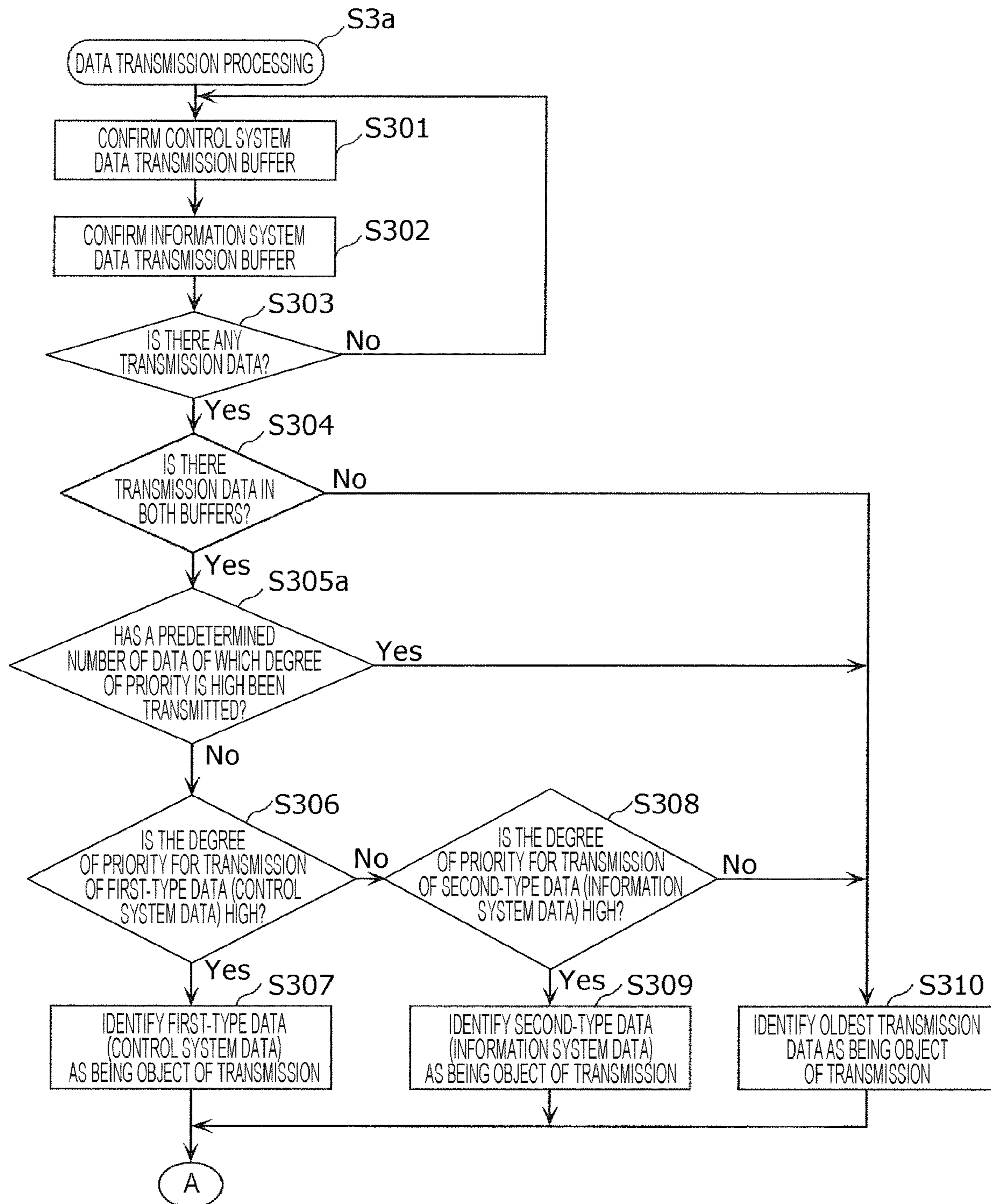


FIG. 19



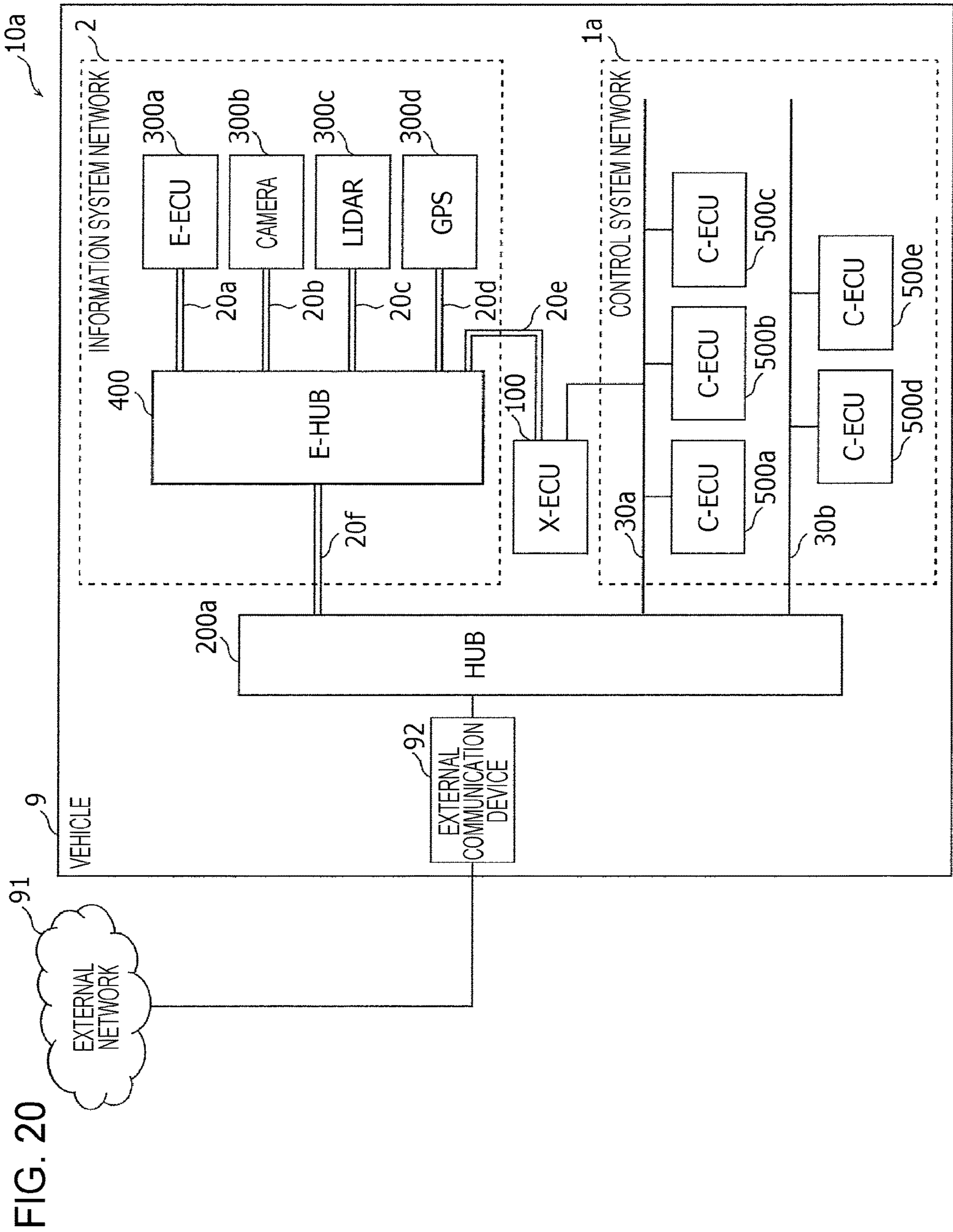


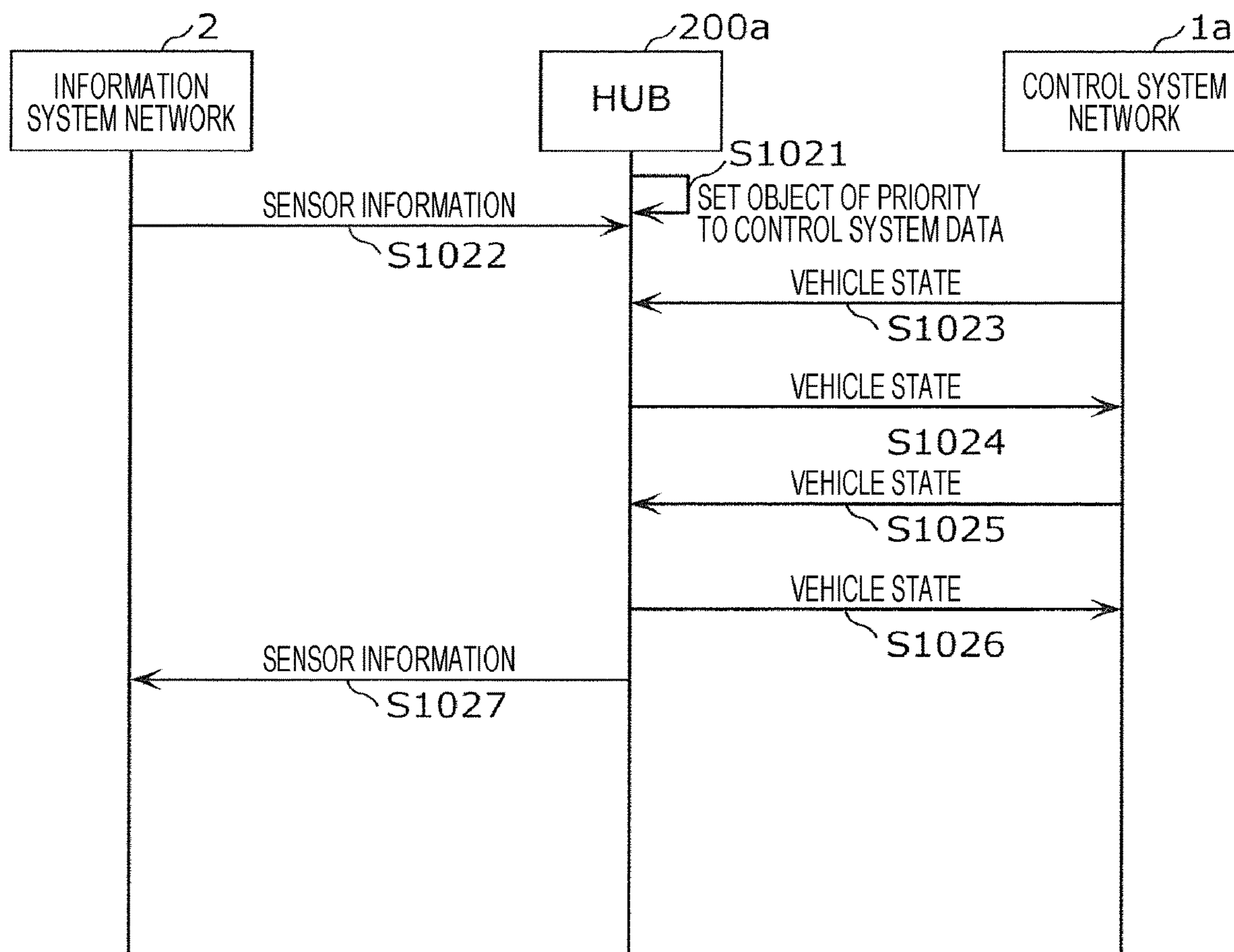
FIG. 20

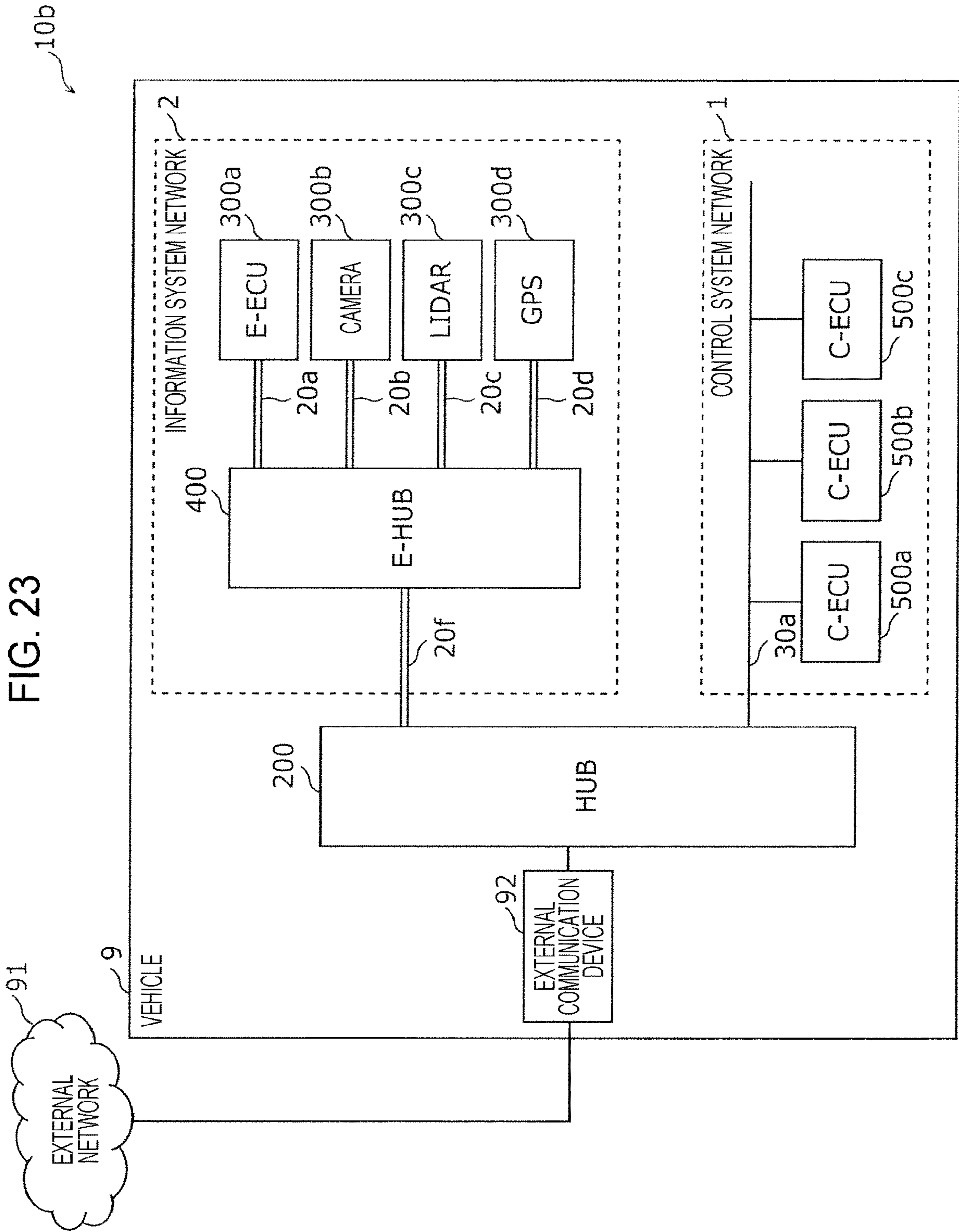
FIG. 21

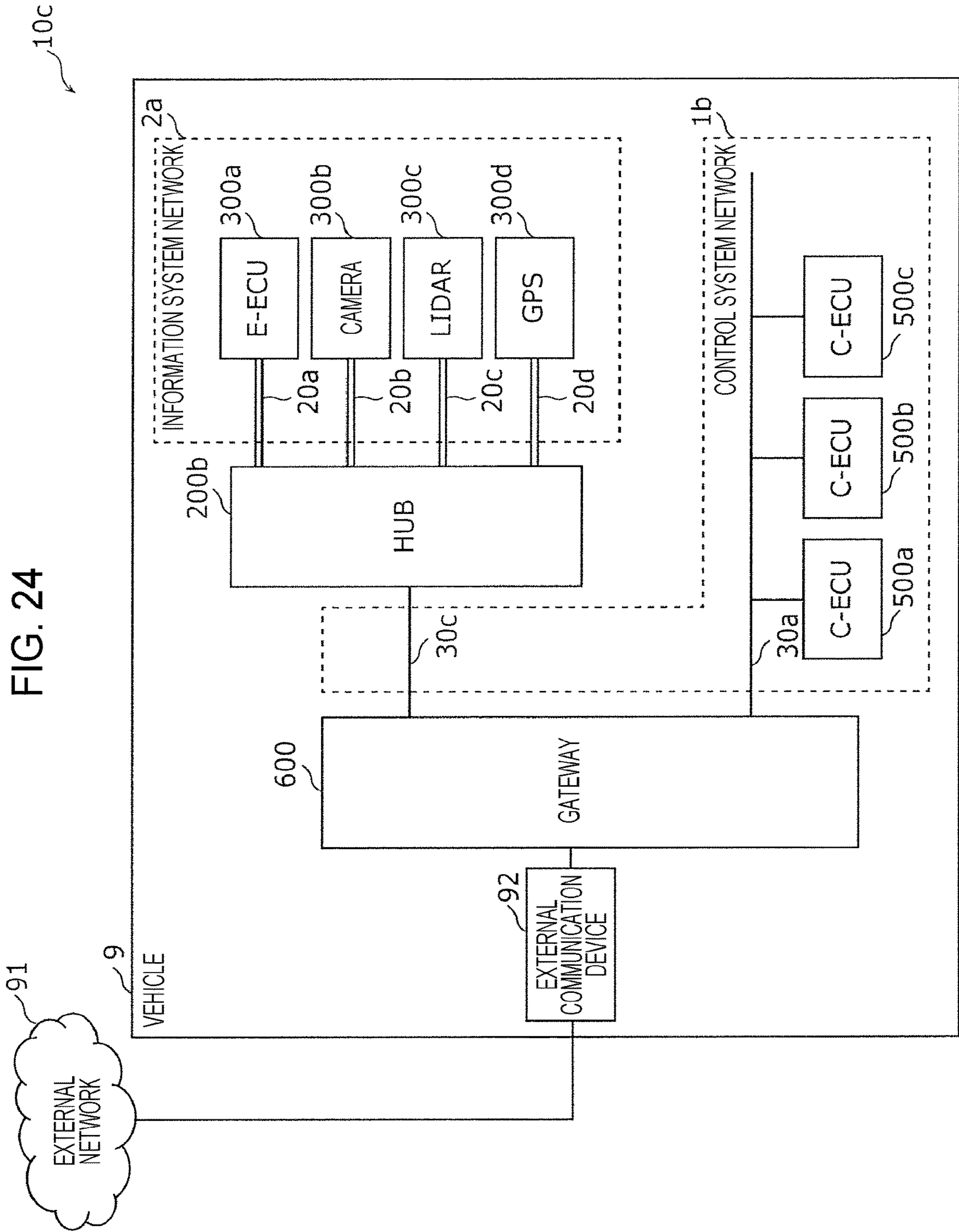
DEGREE-OF-PRIORITY CONTROL INFORMATION

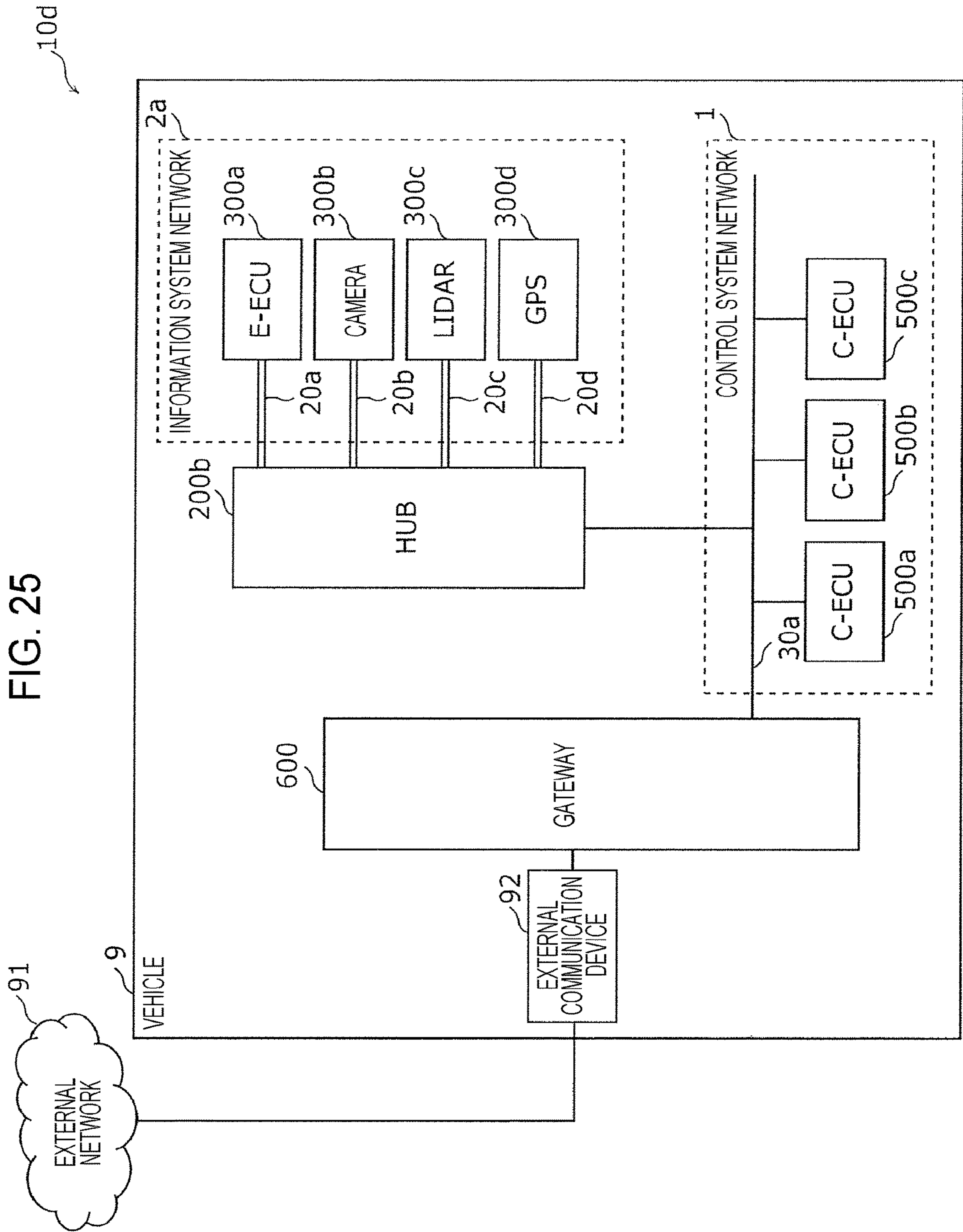
TRAVELING STATE OF VEHICLE	OBJECT OF PRIORITY
TRAVELING	CONTROL SYSTEM DATA
STOPPED	INFORMATION SYSTEM DATA

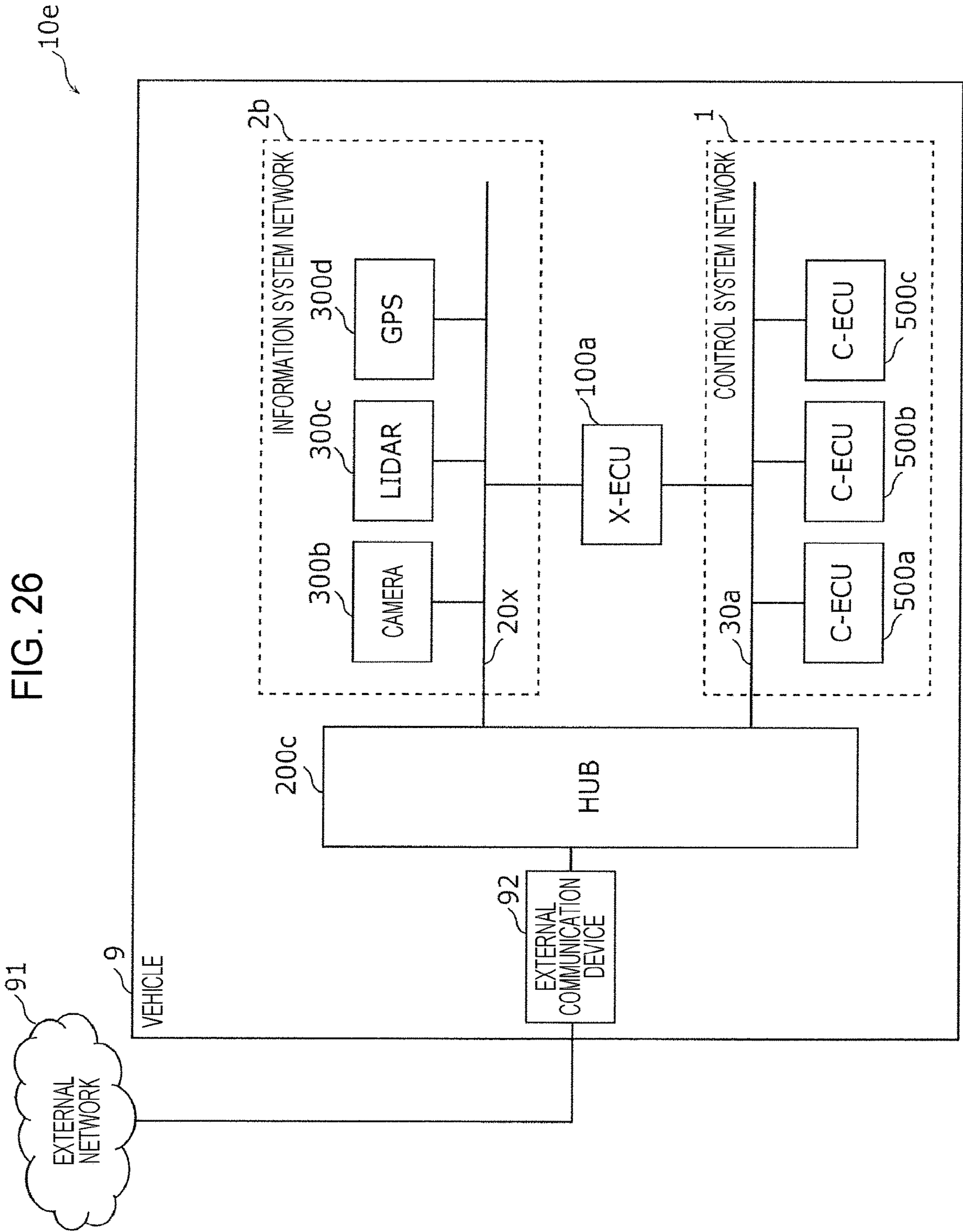
FIG. 22

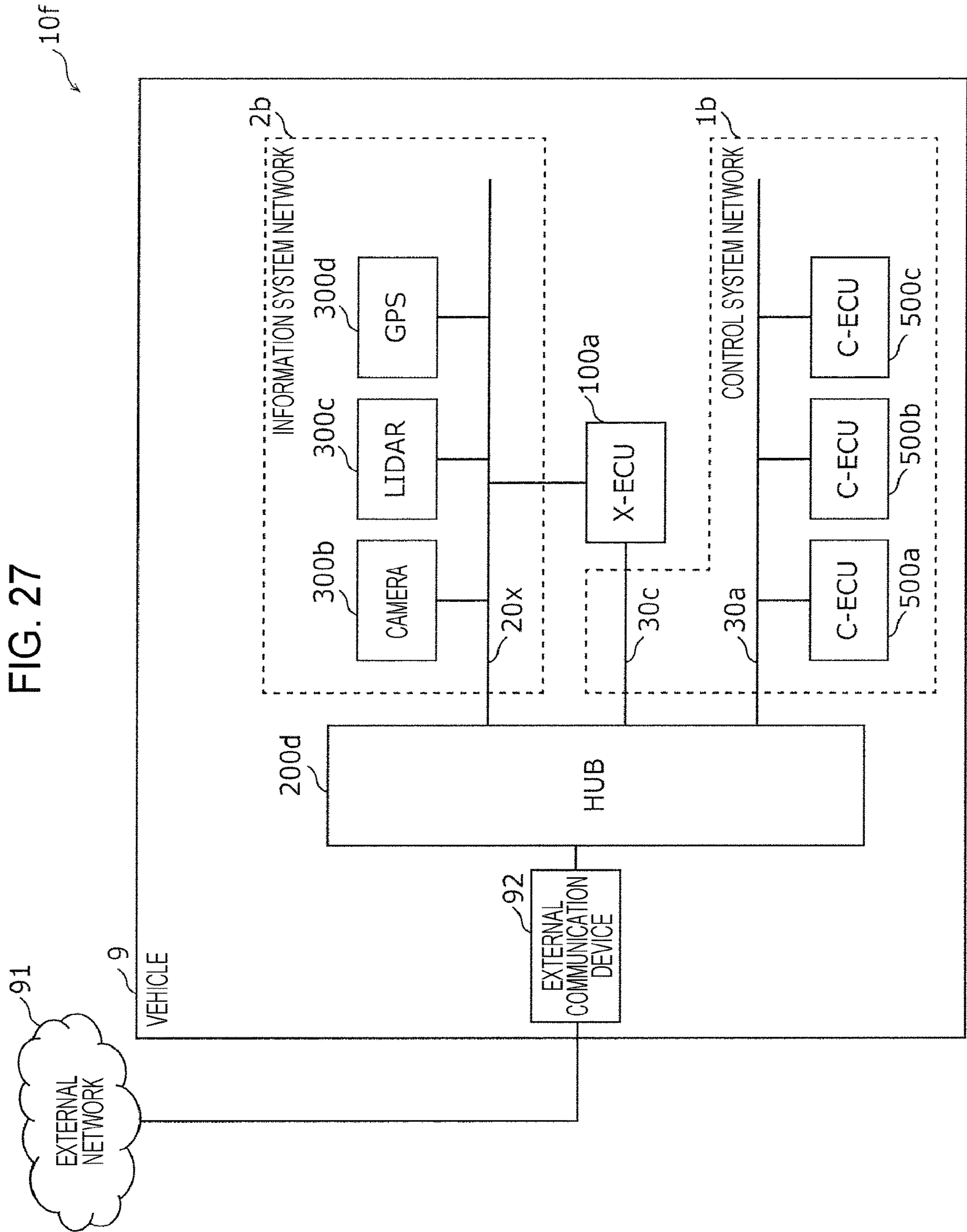




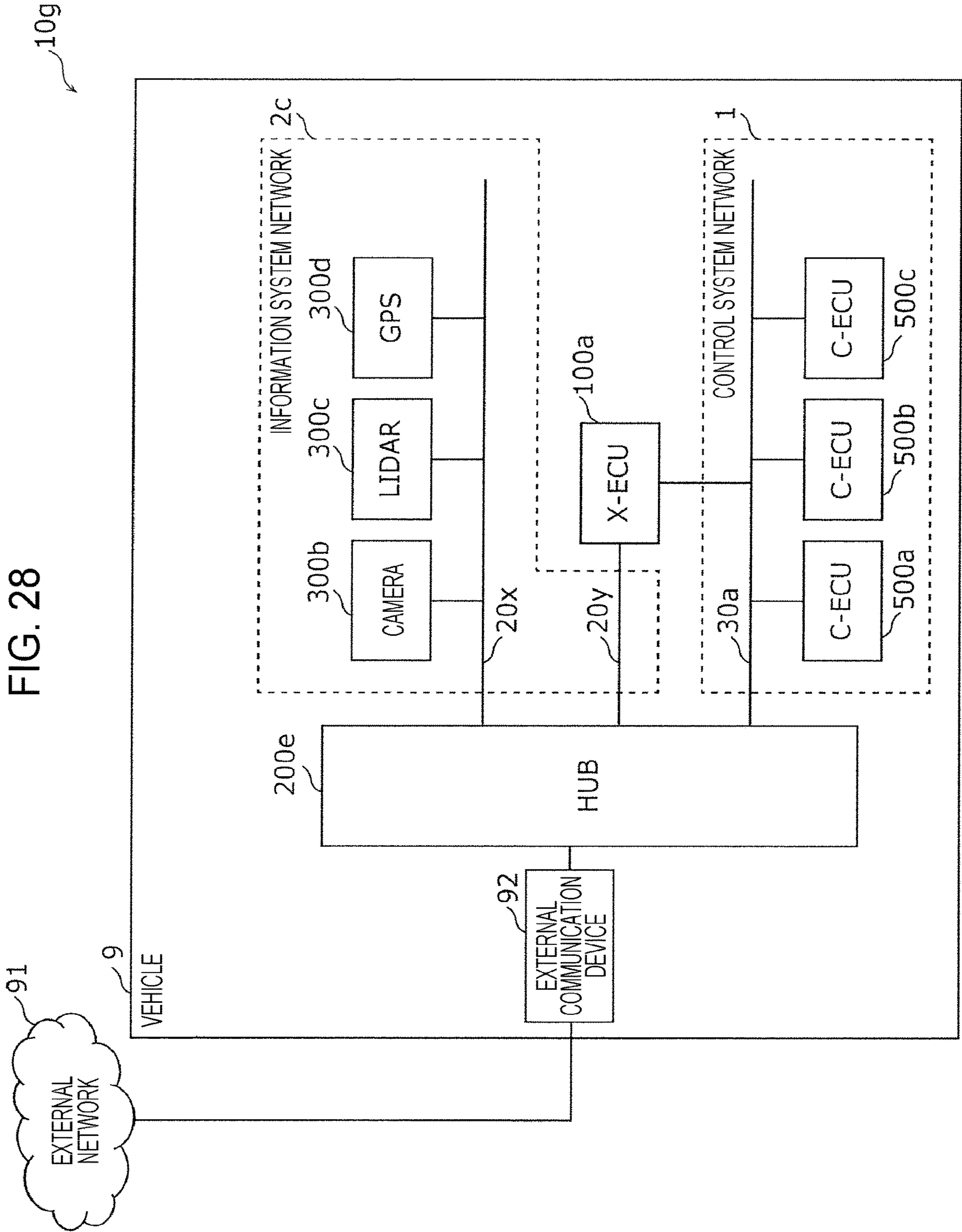








10f



1

**ELECTRONIC CONTROL UNIT,
COMMUNICATION METHOD, AND
ONBOARD NETWORK SYSTEM**

CROSS-REFERENCE PARAGRAPH TO
RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 16/188,328, filed on Nov. 13, 2018, which is a continuation of International Patent Application No. PCT/JP2017/015815, filed on Apr. 20, 2017, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 62/342,536, filed on May 27, 2016, and the benefit of Japanese Patent Application No. 2017-061874, filed on Mar. 27, 2017. The entire disclosure of each of the above-identified applications, including the specification, drawings, and claims, is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

1. Technical Field

The present disclosure relates to message processing technology for exchanging messages over an onboard network system including multiple network that have properties different from each other.

2. Description of the Related Art

Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 2016-111477 describes a gateway that relays messages between devices conforming to the CAN protocol and devices conforming to the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol and so forth.

SUMMARY

Further improvement has been needed with the above related art.

In one general aspect, the techniques disclosed here feature an electronic control unit connected to a bus of a first network and connected to a second network in an onboard network system, the onboard network system including the first network for transmission of first-type frames relating to traveling control of a vehicle over the bus following a first communication protocol, and the second network for transmission of second-type frames following a second communication protocol that is different from the first communication protocol. The electronic control unit includes: a first reception buffer; a second reception buffer; a first transmission buffer; a second transmission buffer; a first receiver that sequentially receives the first-type frames from the bus and stores data within the first-type frames in the first reception buffer; a second receiver that sequentially receives the second-type frames from the second network and stores data within the second-type frames in the second reception buffer; a processor that sequentially generates first-type data that is data for traveling control of the vehicle, and second-type data that is data other than traveling control of the vehicle, by referencing the contents of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, stores the generated first-type data in the first transmission buffer, and stores the generated second-type data in the second transmission buffer; and a transmitter that transmits yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data in the second transmission

2

buffer. The transmitter performs priority transmission control, where priority type data, which is one of the first-type data and the second-type data, is transmitted with priority over non-priority type data that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data.

According to the present disclosure, further improvement can be realized.

It should be noted that general or specific embodiments may be implemented as a system, a method, an integrated circuit, a computer program, a storage medium, or any selective combination thereof.

Additional benefits and advantages of the disclosed embodiments will become apparent from the specification and drawings. The benefits and/or advantages may be individually obtained by the various embodiments and features of the specification and drawings, which need not all be provided in order to obtain one or more of such benefits and/or advantages.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a diagram illustrating an onboard network including two networks in an onboard network system according to a first embodiment;

FIG. 2 is a diagram illustrating a schematic configuration of the onboard network system according to the first embodiment;

FIGS. 3A and 3B are diagrams illustrating a format of a data frame stipulated in the CAN protocol (also referred to as "CAN frame");

FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating the format of an Ethernet (registered trademark) frame (also referred to as "E-frame") exchanged over part of the onboard network;

FIG. 5 is a configuration diagram of an electronic control unit connected to two networks according to the first embodiment (also referred to as "X-ECU");

FIG. 6 is a diagram illustrating an example of a reception ID list used at the electronic control unit (X-ECU) network hub, and so forth, in the first embodiment;

FIG. 7 is a configuration diagram of the hub according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 8 is a diagram illustrating an example of transfer rule information used at the hub according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 9 is a flowchart illustrating an example of data processing by the X-ECU according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 10 is a flowchart illustrating an example of reception data readout processing by the X-ECU according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 11 is a flowchart illustrating an example of transmission data generating processing by the X-ECU according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 12 is a flowchart illustrating an example of data transmission processing by the X-ECU according to the first embodiment (continuing to FIG. 13);

FIG. 13 is a flowchart illustrating an example of data transmission processing by the X-ECU according to the first embodiment (continuing from FIG. 12);

FIG. 14 is a flowchart illustrating an example of data transfer processing by the hub according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 15 is a flowchart illustrating an example of transfer data generating processing by the hub according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 16 is a sequence diagram illustrating an example of a processing sequence by ADAS functions of the X-ECU according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 17 is a diagram illustrating an example of a communication sequence relating to transfer functions of the hub according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 18 is a flowchart illustrating an example of reception data readout processing according to a modification of the first embodiment;

FIG. 19 is a flowchart illustrating an example of data transmission processing according to a modification of the first embodiment;

FIG. 20 is a diagram illustrating a schematic configuration of the onboard network system according to a second embodiment;

FIG. 21 is a diagram illustrating an example of degree-of-priority control information, used by a hub according to the second embodiment;

FIG. 22 is a diagram illustrating an example of a communication sequence related to transfer functions of the hub according to the second embodiment;

FIG. 23 is a diagram illustrating a schematic configuration of an onboard network system according to a first modification;

FIG. 24 is a diagram illustrating a schematic configuration of an onboard network system according to a second modification;

FIG. 25 is a diagram illustrating a schematic configuration of an onboard network system according to a third modification;

FIG. 26 is a diagram illustrating a schematic configuration of an onboard network system according to a fourth modification;

FIG. 27 is a diagram illustrating a schematic configuration of an onboard network system according to a fifth modification; and

FIG. 28 is a diagram illustrating a schematic configuration of an onboard network system according to a sixth modification.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Underlying Knowledge Forming Basis of the Present Disclosure

In recent years, a great number of devices called electronic control units (ECU) have been placed in systems in automobiles. A network connecting these ECUs is referred to as an onboard network. Many standards exist for onboard networks. One of the most mainstream of these onboard networks is a standard called Controller Area Network (CAN), that is stipulated in ISO11898-1. In CAN, ECUs (nodes) connected to a bus that is a wired transmission path exchange frames (messages). There are no identifiers indicating transmission destinations or transmission sources in CAN. A transmitting node appends an ID (CAN-ID) to each frame and transmits (i.e., sends signals out onto the bus), and the receiving nodes receive (i.e., read signals from the bus) only of messages of CAN-IDs set beforehand. In CAN, a CAN-ID relates to the degree of priority of the message, and in a case where multiple nodes transmit messages at the same time, communication arbitration is performed in accordance with the values of the CAN-IDs. Communication arbitration and the like enables situations where messages collide and are lost on the bus to be avoided, so a CAN network is suitable for transmitting data regarding traveling control of vehicles and so forth, where loss of data could prevent safe traveling of the vehicle.

There also are known advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS). Functions of ADAS (e.g., parking assistance, lane-keeping assistance, collision avoidance functions, and

so forth) use information obtained by sensors connected to the onboard network system for example, which is to say that images taken by onboard cameras and information obtained by Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) is used, the surrounding environment of the vehicle is recognized by ECUs based on the information, and the vehicle is controlled in accordance with the results of recognition. Increasingly sophisticated ADASs can lead to increase in the amount of information communicated over the onboard network (data amount). The amount of data that can be transmitted by one frame (data frame in standard format) is eight bytes or less in CAN, which is not suitable for transmission of relatively large data amounts, such as images taken by onboard cameras, and so forth.

There is a standard called Ethernet (registered trademark) stipulated by IEEE 802.3, as a standard to transmit a greater amount of information. A frame in Ethernet (registered trademark) includes information indicating a transmission destination and a transmission source, in the header. The maximum amount of data that can be transmitted by one frame is greater in Ethernet (registered trademark) as compared to CAN, and the communication speed is faster. As described above, a CAN network that can avoid loss of messages is more suitable for data transmission for vehicle traveling control, but some loss of data such as images taken by onboard cameras or the like has little adverse effect. Accordingly, Ethernet (registered trademark) is more suitable for transmission of relatively large data such as images taken by onboard cameras or the like, as compared to a CAN network.

Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 2016-111477 describes a gateway that relays messages between devices conforming to the CAN protocol and devices conforming to the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol and so forth. It is useful to have electronic control units (ECUs) to realize ADAS functions in an onboard network system connected to both a CAN network and Ethernet (registered trademark) network, in the same way as the gateway in Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 2016-111477. Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 2016-111477 does not indicate specific content of processing of the gateway exchanging messages between electronic control units connected to a CAN bus (hereinafter also referred to as “C-ECU”) and electronic control units having an Ethernet (registered trademark) interface (hereafter referred to as “E-ECU”).

The present Inventors have conceived the embodiments of the present disclosure based on the above-described consideration.

An electronic control unit (ECU) according to an aspect of the present disclosure is an electronic control unit connected to a bus of a first network and connected to a second network in an onboard network system, the onboard network system including the first network for transmission of first-type frames relating to traveling control of a vehicle over the bus following a first communication protocol, and the second network for transmission of second-type frames following a second communication protocol that is different from the first communication protocol. The electronic control unit includes: a first reception buffer; a second reception buffer; a first transmission buffer; a second transmission buffer; a first receiver that sequentially receives the first-type frames from the bus and stores data within the first-type frames in the first reception buffer; a second receiver that sequentially receives the second-type frames from the second network and stores data within the second-type frames in the second reception buffer; a processor that sequentially generates

5

first-type data that is data for traveling control of the vehicle, and second-type data that is data other than traveling control of the vehicle, by referencing the contents of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, stores the generated first-type data in the first transmission buffer, and stores the generated second-type data in the second transmission buffer; and a transmitter that transmits yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data in the second transmission buffer. The transmitter perform priority transmission control, where priority type data, which is one of the first-type data and the second-type data, is transmitted with priority over non-priority type data that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data. This electronic control unit is a communication device connected to the bus of the first network and to the second network, and transmits frames following communication protocols used on networks that are the transmission destination of data, as signals corresponding to the networks that are the transmission destination. According to this electronic control unit, one of a flow of data being transmitted to the first network and a flow of data being transmitted to the second network can be prioritized (i.e., transmission of the one data can be performed first), for example. Thus, according to this electronic control unit, transmission of data can be appropriately performed if priority type data is set appropriately taking into consideration the properties of each of the first network and second network.

An arrangement may be made where the priority type data is the first-type data, and in a case where predetermined exception conditions are not satisfied, the transmitter performs transmission of the first-type data by sending the first-type frame including the first-type data to the bus of the first network, and in a case where the exception conditions are satisfied, performs transmission of the first-type data by sending the second-type frame including the first-type data to the second network, and the transmitter performs transmission of the second-type data by sending the second-type frame including the second-type data to the second network. The predetermined exception conditions may be conditions that are satisfied when an abnormality is detected in a part of the first network. According to these, in a case where there is a possibility that appropriate transmission will not be performed by transmitting data to the first network, transmission of the first-type data (i.e., data to be transmitted to the first network in a normal state or the like where the exception conditions are not satisfied) is performed using the second network as a diversion route. The first-type data in the first transmission buffer can be transmitted by this electronic control unit over the second network that is a diversion route, and thereafter be transported again from the second network to the destination first network by a relay device (hub or the like) connected to the second network and first network, for example. Even in a case where the first-type data in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data in the second transmission buffer compete, each data is transmitted by an appropriate order, by priority transmission control where the first-type data is given priority. That is to say, priority is given to the first-type data to be transmitted to the first network that is suitable for transmission of data relating to traveling control of the vehicle, thereby preventing transmission of other data (e.g., large-size data such as images or the like) from adversely affecting safe traveling of the vehicle and so forth. Even in a case where the configuration realizing transmission of the data in the first transmission buffer (e.g., communication circuit, processor, etc.) and the configuration realizing transmission of the data in

6

the second transmission buffer are partially used in common in the electronic control unit, transmission of data relating to traveling control of the vehicle is given priority, thereby preventing transmission of other data from adversely affecting safe traveling of the vehicle and so forth.

An arrangement may be made where the transmitter performs the priority transmission control by repeatedly confirming the first transmission buffer and the second transmission buffer, transmitting the priority type data out of the first-type data and the second-type data in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data is in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming, transmitting the first-type data in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data is in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data is not in the second transmission buffer during the confirming, and transmitting the second-type data in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data is not in the first transmission buffer but yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming. Accordingly, in a case where the is first-type data to be transmitted to the first network, and second-type data to be transmitted and of which the destination of the second network, in the respective transmission buffers, the electronic control unit first transmits the one of the first-type data and second-type data that has been decided beforehand (i.e., priority type data), so that one data can be speedily transmitted.

An arrangement may be made where the transmitter performs the priority transmission control by repeatedly confirming the first transmission buffer and the second transmission buffer, transmitting a predetermined quantity of the priority type data that is one of the first-type data and the second-type data, and thereafter transmitting one of the non-priority type data that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data, in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data is in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming, transmitting the first-type data in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data is in the first transmission buffer but yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data is not in the second transmission buffer during the confirming, and transmitting the second-type data in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data is not in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming. The predetermined quantity may be decided to be, for example, a quantity greater than one worth of the priority type data (e.g., a count of two or more data, a data amount that is twice or more that of one data worth, or the like), so that the priority type data within the transmission buffer is transmitted with priority. Accordingly, a situation where no non-priority type data is transmitted at all due to consecutive transmission of priority type data in the transmission buffer can be prevented, for example.

An arrangement may be made where the transmitter performs the priority transmission control by repeatedly confirming the first transmission buffer and the second transmission buffer, transmitting the priority type data that is one of the first-type data and the second-type data when non-transmission time of the non-priority data does not exceed a predetermined threshold value, and transmitting the non-priority type data that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data when non-transmission time exceeds the predetermined threshold value, in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data is in the first transmis-

sion buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming, transmitting the first-type data in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data is in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data is not in the second transmission buffer during the confirming, and transmitting the second-type data in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data is not in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming. The predetermined threshold value relating to non-transmission time may be decided to be, for example, a time longer than the time required for transmission of one worth of priority type data, so that the priority type data within the transmission buffer is transmitted with priority. Accordingly, a situation where no non-priority type data is transmitted at all due to consecutive transmission of priority type data can be prevented, for example.

An arrangement may be made where the processor generates first-type data as a result of processing based on data relating to the first-type frame read from the first reception buffer, and generates second-type data as a result of processing based on data relating to the second-type frame read from the second reception buffer, and the processor performs priority readout control where contents of a priority reception buffer that is one of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer is read with priority over contents of a non-priority reception buffer that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data. Accordingly, in a case where the configuration realizing readout of the data in the first transmission buffer and generating data to be transmitted based on at least that data (e.g., processor, etc.) and the configuration realizing readout of the data in the second transmission buffer and generating data to be transmitted based on at least that data are partially used in common in the electronic control unit, data in one reception buffer can be given propriety in accordance with the network that will realize speedy transmission.

An arrangement may be made where the processor performs the priority readout control by repeatedly confirming the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, reading unread data in the priority buffer that is one of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer in a case where unread data is in the first reception buffer and unread data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming, reading unread data in the first reception buffer in a case where unread data is in the first reception buffer and unread data is not in the second reception buffer during the confirming, and reading the unread data in the second reception buffer in a case where unread data is not in the first reception buffer but unread data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming. Accordingly, in a case where there is unread data received from the first network (i.e., data that has not been read out) and unread data received from the second network the one data corresponding to the priority reception buffer decided beforehand is read out first, so data generated based on that tone data can be speedily transmitted.

An arrangement may be made where the processor performs the priority readout control by repeatedly confirming the first transmission buffer and the second transmission buffer, reading a predetermined quantity of unread data in the priority reception buffer that is one of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, and thereafter reading one unread data in the non-priority reception buffer that is another of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, in a case where unread data is in the first reception

buffer and unread data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming, reading unread data in the first reception buffer in a case where unread data is in the first reception buffer and unread data is not in the second reception buffer during the confirming, and reading the unread data in the second reception buffer in a case where unread data is not in the first reception buffer but unread data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming. The predetermined quantity may be decided to be, for example, a quantity greater than one worth of the priority type data (e.g., a count of two or more data, a data amount that is twice or more that of one data worth, or the like), so that the priority type data within the transmission buffer is transmitted with priority. Accordingly, a situation where no non-priority type data is transmitted at all due to consecutive transmission of priority type data in the transmission buffer can be prevented, for example.

An arrangement may be made where the processor performs the priority readout control by repeatedly confirming the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, reading unread data in the priority reception buffer when the unread the time of unread data in the non-priority reception buffer that is one of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer does not exceed a certain threshold value, and reading unread data in the non-priority reception buffer that is another of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer when the non-transmission time exceeds the certain threshold value, in a case where unread data is in the first reception buffer and unread data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming, reading unread data in the first reception buffer in a case where unread data is in the first reception buffer but unread data is not in the second reception buffer during the confirming, and reading the unread data in the second reception buffer in a case where unread data is not in the first reception buffer but unread data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming. The certain threshold value relating to non-transmission time may be decided to be, for example, a time longer than the time required for transmission of one worth of priority type data, so that the priority type data within the transmission buffer is transmitted with priority. Accordingly, a situation where no non-priority type data is transmitted at all due to consecutive transmission of priority type data can be prevented, for example.

The priority reception buffer may be the first reception buffer while the vehicle is traveling, and the second reception buffer while the vehicle is stopped. Accordingly, when the vehicle is traveling, transmission of data generated based on received data relating to traveling control of the vehicle can be speedily performed, and when the vehicle is stopped, transmission of data generated based on received data other than data relating to traveling control of the vehicle (e.g., multimedia data such as images, audio, etc., and so forth) can be speedily performed, for example.

An arrangement may be made where the first communication protocol is the CAN (Controller Area Network) protocol, the second communication protocol is the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol, the first-type frame is a data frame, and the second-type frame is an Ethernet (registered trademark) frame. Accordingly, data generated based on data received from one of a CAN network suitable for transmission of data relating to traveling control of the vehicle, and an Ethernet (registered trademark) network suitable for transmission of large-size data such as images and so forth, can be appropriately transmitted in accordance with a necessary degree of priority.

A maximum data amount of the second-type frame following the second communication protocol may be greater than a maximum data amount of the first-type frame following the first communication protocol. Accordingly, data generated based on data received from one of the first network serving as a control system network suitable for transmission of data relating to traveling control of the vehicle, and the second network serving as an information system network suitable for transmission of large-size data such as images and so forth, due to having a greater maximum data amount for a transmission increment, can be appropriately transmitted in accordance with a degree of priority (information identifying priority type data, etc.) decided in accordance with properties of the networks.

The priority type data may be the first-type data while the vehicle is traveling, and the second-type data while the vehicle is stopped. Accordingly, when the vehicle is traveling, transmission of first-type data to be transmitted to the first network that is suitable for transmission relating to traveling control of the vehicle can be speedily performed, and when the vehicle is stopped, transmission of second-type data to be transmitted to the second network that is suitable for transmission of data other than data relating to traveling control of the vehicle (e.g., multimedia data such as images, audio, etc., and so forth) can be speedily performed, for example.

A communication method according to an aspect of the present disclosure is a communication method for an electronic control unit connected to a bus of a first network and connected to a second network in an onboard network system, the onboard network system including the first network for transmission of first-type frames relating to traveling control of a vehicle over the bus following a first communication protocol, and the second network for transmission of second-type frames following a second communication protocol that is different from the first communication protocol. The electronic control unit includes a first reception buffer, a second reception buffer, a first transmission buffer, and a second transmission buffer. The method includes: sequentially receiving the first-type frames from the bus and storing first stored data within the first-type frames in the first reception buffer; sequentially receiving the second-type frames from the second network and storing second stored data within the second-type frames in the second reception buffer; sequentially generating first-type data that is data for traveling control of the vehicle, and second-type data that is data other than traveling control of the vehicle, by referencing the contents of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, storing the generated first-type data in the first transmission buffer, and storing the generated second-type data in the second transmission buffer; and transmitting yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data in the second transmission buffer. In the transmitting, priority transmission control is performed where priority type data, which is one of the first-type data and the second-type data, is transmitted with priority over non-priority type data that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data. Accordingly, transmission of data can be appropriately performed if priority type data is set appropriately taking into consideration the properties of each of the first network and second network.

An onboard network system according to an aspect of the present disclosure is an onboard network system including: a first network for transmission of first-type frames relating to traveling control of a vehicle over a bus following a first communication protocol; a second network for transmission

of second-type frames following a second communication protocol that is different from the first communication protocol; a first electronic control unit connected to the bus; a second electronic control unit connected to the second network; and a third electronic control unit connected to the bus and the second network. The third electronic control unit comprises a first reception buffer, a second reception buffer, a first transmission buffer, a second transmission buffer, a first receiver that sequentially receives the first-type frames from the bus and stores first stored data within the first-type frames in the first reception buffer, a second receiver that sequentially receives the second-type frames from the second network and stores second stored data within the second-type frames in the second reception buffer, a processor that sequentially generates first-type data that is data for traveling control of the vehicle, and second-type data that is data other than traveling control of the vehicle, by referencing the contents of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, stores the generated first-type data in the first transmission buffer, and stores the generated second-type data in the second transmission buffer, and a transmitter that transmits yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data in the second transmission buffer. The transmitter performs priority transmission control, where priority type data, which is one of the first-type data and the second-type data, is transmitted with priority over non-priority type data that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data. Accordingly, the predetermined electronic control unit can appropriately transmit data by priority transmission control to the devices (electronic control units, etc.) connected to one of networks that are different from each other.

It should be noted that these general or specific embodiments may be implemented as a system, a method, an integrated circuit, a computer program, or a computer-readable recording medium such as a CD-ROM, and may be realized by any combination of a system, method, integrated circuit, computer program, and recording medium.

The following is a description of an onboard network system including an electronic control unit (ECU) and a network hub according to embodiments with reference to the drawings. Note that the embodiments described below are all specific examples of the present disclosure. Accordingly, values, components, placements and connected states of components, steps (processes) and the order of steps, and so forth illustrated in the following embodiments, are only exemplary, and do not restrict the present disclosure. Components in the following embodiments which are not included in an independent Claim are optionally addable components. The drawings are schematic diagrams, and are not necessarily created in an exact manner.

First Embodiment

An onboard network system **10** including multiple ECUs and a network hub that exchange data over an onboard network will be described as an embodiment of the present disclosure with reference to the drawings.

1.1 Overall Configuration of Onboard Network System **10**

FIG. **1** is a diagram illustrating an onboard network **11** including two networks in the onboard network system **10**. Installed in a vehicle **9** are various types of devices, such as control devices, sensors, actuators, user interface devices,

11

ECUs, and so forth. The onboard network system **10** is a network communication system that has the onboard network **11** for the various devices such as the sensors, ECUs, and so forth, installed in the vehicle **9**, to exchange information in cooperation. The onboard network **11** is configured including a control system network **1** (first network) where various types of frames such as data frames relating to traveling control of the vehicle **9** are transmitted over a bus (CAN bus) following the CAN protocol, and an information system network **2** (second network) where Ethernet (registered trademark) frames (E-frames) are transmitted following the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol. The onboard network **11** can be wirelessly connected to an external network **91** outside of the vehicle **9**, such as the Internet or the like.

The maximum data amount of an E-frame (1500 bytes or more) stipulated by the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol is considerably greater than the maximum data amount of CAN frame (eight bytes for standard format) stipulated by the CAN protocol, electronic control units relating to traveling control of the vehicle **9** (C-ECUs) and so forth are connected to the bus of the control system network **1**. Relatively small data, such as vehicle state data indicating the state of the vehicle **9** that is the base for traveling control of the vehicle **9**, vehicle control data for traveling control that indicates operation instructions of actuators installed in the vehicle **9**, and so forth, are primarily transmitted over the control system network **1**. Various types of sensors that observe the situation around the vehicle **9**, such as onboard cameras (i.e., image sensors), LIDAR, and so forth, are connected to the information system network **2**. Electronic control units for processing information from the sensors and providing information to the passenger (user) of the vehicle **9** (E-ECUs) may also be connected to the information system network **2**. Sensor information such as images taken by onboard cameras, three-dimensional data generated by LIDAR, and so forth (e.g., relatively large data generated by sensors) is primarily transmitted over the information system network **2**.

FIG. 2 illustrates the overall configuration of the onboard network system **10**. The onboard network system **10** includes the control system network **1**, the information system network **2**, a network hub **200** connected to both networks, and an electronic control unit **100** connected to both networks (referred to as “X-ECU”).

C-ECUs **500a** through **500c**, which are ECUs having communication interfaces conforming to the CAN protocol, are connected to a bus **30a** that is a transmission path in the control system network **1**. The C-ECUs **500a** through **500c** respectively are an engine control ECU that handles control of the engine, a steering control ECU that handles control of steering, and a brake control ECU that handles control of braking, and so forth. The C-ECUs **500a** through **500c** communicate with each other via the bus **30a**, and exchange frames following the CAN protocol. The C-ECUs **500a** through **500c** respectively obtain the state of the engine, steering, brakes, and so forth, and transmit data frames (CAN frames) indicating state to the bus **30a** making up the control system network **1**, periodically for example. The C-ECUs **500a** through **500c** can also receive CAN frames from the bus **30a** making up the control system network **1**, interpret the CAN frames, distinguish whether or not the CAN frames are CAN frames having CAN-IDs that should be received, and effect control relating to the engine, steering, brakes, and so forth, connected to the C-ECUs, in

12

accordance with data within the CAN frames (contents of data fields) as necessary, and also generate and transmit CAN frames as necessary.

In the information system network **2**, an E-ECU **300a** that is an ECU having a communication interface conforming to the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol, a camera **300b**, a LIDAR **300c**, and a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver (referred to as “GPS”) **300d**, are connected by an E-hub **400** that is a network hub conforming to Ethernet (registered trademark), and each of Ethernet (registered trademark) cables **20a** through **20d** that are transmission paths. The E-ECU **300a** performs transmission and receptions of E-frames following the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol. The E-ECU **300a** may have a display, for example, and be an ECU having functions of providing information to the user. The E-ECU **300a**, camera **300b**, LIDAR **300c**, and GPS **300d**, each have unique Media Access Control (MAC) addresses. The E-hub **400** is, for example, an Ethernet (registered trademark) switch (switching hub). The E-hub **400** stores a MAC address table for example, and learns corresponding MAC addresses for each cable connecting terminal (port) upon receiving E-frames. The E-hub **400** also selects a port to serve as a transfer destination based on a destination MAC address in the header of a received E-frame in accordance with the MAC address table, and sends the E-frame out to the cable connected to that port, thereby transferring the E-frame.

The X-ECU **100** is an ECU that has a communication interface conforming to the CAN protocol and a communication interface conforming to the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol, and handles some types of ADAS functions (e.g., parking assistance, lane-keeping assistance, collision avoidance functions, and so forth). The X-ECU **100** is connected to the bus **30a**, and is connected to the E-hub **400** by an Ethernet (registered trademark) cable **20e**. The X-ECU **100** has a unique MAC address.

The hub **200** is a communication device that has a communication protocol conversion function, and has a communication data relay function. The hub **200** is connected to the bus **30a**, and is connected to the E-hub **400** by an Ethernet (registered trademark) cable **20f**. The hub **200** has a unique MAC address, for example. The hub **200** is also connected to an external communication device **92**. The external communication device **92** is a device having communication functions of communicating with a server device outside of the vehicle **9** (e.g., a computer having functions of providing information to the vehicle or the like) via the external network **91** and so forth, for example.

Note that many more ECUs may be included in the onboard network system **10** besides the X-ECU **100**, E-ECU **300a**, and C-ECUs **500a** through **500c**. For example, C-ECUs that are omitted from illustration may be connected to the bus **30a** besides the C-ECUs **500a** through **500c**. Also, E-ECUs omitted from illustration may be connected to the E-hub **400**, either directly or via another E-hub, for example.

The ECUs (E-ECUs, C-ECUs, and X-ECU) are devices that include, for example, processors (microprocessors), digital circuits such as memory and so forth, analog circuits, communication circuits, and so forth. The memory is ROM, RAM, and so forth, and can store programs (computer programs serving as software) that are executed by processors. The memory may include non-volatile memory. An ECU realized various types of functions by a processor operating in accordance with programs (computer programs), for example. Note that a computer program is configured by combining multiple sets of command codes

instructing commands with respect to the processor, to achieve predetermined functions.

1.2 Configuration of Frames Exchanged Over Onboard Network 11

The C-ECUs **500a** through **500c** and so forth exchange frames following the CAN protocol on the control system network **1**. Frames in the CAN protocol include data frames, remote frames, overload frames, and error frames. Data frames will be described with primary focus here.

FIGS. **3A** and **3B** illustrate the format of a data frame (CAN frame) exchange exchanged over the control system network **1**. FIG. **3A** illustrates a standard format. A data frame includes a start of frame (SOF), ID (CAN-ID), remote transmission request (RTR), identifier extension (IDE), reserved bit “r”, size data, cyclic redundancy check (CRC) sequence, CRC delimiter “DEL”, acknowledgement (ACK) slot, ACK delimiter “DEL”, and end of frame (EOF), in the standard format. The ID (CAN-ID) serving as the content of the ID field is an identifier indicating the type of data, and also is referred to as a message ID. Note that in CAN, in a case where multiple nodes start transmission at the same time, communication arbitration is performed, where a frame having the smallest CAN-ID value is given priority. Size is a data length code (DLC) indicating the length of the following data field (data). The specification of the data (content of the data) is not stipulated in the CAN protocol, and is set in the onboard network system **10**. Accordingly, the specification can be dependent on the model of the vehicle, the manufacturer (automaker), or the like. FIG. **3B** illustrates an extended format. Although the standard format will be described as being used on the control system network **1** in the present embodiment, in a case of using the extended format on the control system network **1**, the 29 bits of the 11-bit base ID in the ID field (part of the CAN-ID), and the 18-bit extended ID (remainder of CAN-ID), having been combined, can be used as the CAN-ID.

FIG. **4** illustrates the format of frames exchanged on the information system network **2** (E-frames). An E-frame is confirmed by adding a header (Ethernet (registered trademark) header) in front of the payload that stores data, which is the primary content being transmitted, as illustrated in FIG. **4**. The header includes destination MAC address, transmission source MAC address, and type.

1.3 Configuration of X-ECU 100

FIG. **5** is a configuration diagram of the X-ECU **100**. The X-ECU **100** is configured including a reception unit **110a** (first reception unit), a reception unit **110b** (second reception unit), a reception buffer **120a** (first reception buffer), a reception buffer **120b** (second reception buffer), a generating unit **130**, a transmission buffer **140a** (first transmission buffer), a transmission buffer **140b** (second transmission buffer), a transmission unit **150**, and a degree-of-priority setting unit **160**. These components are realized by communication circuits in the X-ECU **100**, a processor or digital circuits executing programs stored in the memory, and so forth.

The reception buffer **120a**, reception buffer **120b**, transmission buffer **140a**, and transmission buffer **140b** are each configured of storage media such as memory or the like, and are first-in first-out (FIFO) buffers, for example. The reception buffer **120a** (first reception buffer) is also referred to as a control system data reception buffer, and the transmission buffer **140a** (first transmission buffer) is also referred to as

a control system data transmission buffer. The reception buffer **120b** (second reception buffer) is also referred to as an information system data reception buffer, and the transmission buffer **140b** (second transmission buffer) is also referred to as an information system data transmission buffer.

The reception unit **110a** sequentially receives CAN frames from the bus **30a** of the control system network **1**. Each time a CAN frame is received, the reception unit **110a** confirms whether the CAN-ID of the received CAN frame is an ID that should be received, based on a reception ID list, and if an ID that should be received, stores the contents of the CAN frame in the reception buffer **120a**. The contents of a CAN frame that the reception unit **110a** stores in the reception buffer **120a** is information where the CAN-ID and size (DLC) and so forth have been added to data (the contents of the data field). FIG. **6** illustrates an example of a reception ID list that the X-ECU **100** uses. The reception ID list of the X-ECU **100** lists CAN-IDs of CAN frames including vehicle state data and so forth, for example. If the CAN-ID of a received CAN frame is an ID not shown in the reception ID list, the reception unit **110a** cancels reception of that CAN frame, and does not store the contents of that CAN frame in the reception buffer **120a**.

The reception unit **110b** sequentially receives E-frames including the MAC address of the X-ECU **100** or the like as the destination MAC address for example, from the cable **20e** of the information system network **2**. Each time an E-frame is received, the reception unit **110b** stores the contents of that E-frame in the reception buffer **120b**. The contents of an E-frame that the reception unit **110a** stores in the reception buffer **120b** is data (contents of the payload), for example. For example, E-frames that have images and other data from various types of sensors such as the camera **300b**, LIDAR **300c**, GPS **300d**, and so forth, in the payloads thereof, are transmitted with the X-ECU **100** as the destination, and the reception unit **110b** receives these E-frames.

The generating unit **130** sequentially generates control system data (first-type data) that is data for traveling control of the vehicle **9** and information system data (second-type data) that is data used for other than traveling control of the vehicle **9** from the contents of the reception buffer **120a** and reception buffer **120b**, stores the generated control system data in the transmission buffer **140a** (control system data transmission buffer) and stores the generated information system data in the transmission buffer **140b** (information system data transmission buffer). The generating unit **130** is configured including a detecting unit **131**, a control judging unit **132**, and a data generating unit **133**.

The detecting unit **131** detects the situation in the environment around the vehicle **9** and various types of items set beforehand regarding the state of the vehicle **9** (e.g., distance to an obstruction in the path of travel of the vehicle **9**, relative speed as to the obstruction, angle between white, yellow, and other color lines displayed on the pavement and the direction of travel of the vehicle **9**, and so forth), based on the data read out from the control system data reception buffer or information system data reception buffer. In a case of reading out data from each of the control system data reception buffer and information system data reception buffer, the detecting unit **131** performs priority readout control, where the contents of a priority reception buffer that is one of the control system data reception buffer and information system data reception buffer are read out with higher propriety than the contents of a non-priority buffer that is the other buffer, based on priority information set in the degree-of-priority setting unit **160** (e.g., information for identifying the priority reception buffer from which readout

15

should be performed with priority, or the like). The degree-of-priority setting unit **160** stores priority information in a region of a storage medium such as memory. Note that in one example of the present embodiment, priority information is set at the degree-of-priority setting unit **160** indicating that data of the control system data reception buffer should be read out with priority over the information system data reception buffer. In a case where data has been read out from the reception buffers **120a** and **120b**, that data is deleted from the reception buffer, for example.

The control judging unit **132** judges whether or not traveling control of the vehicle **9** is necessary, or whether or not control of the various types of sensors installed in the vehicle **9** is necessary, based on the results of detection by the detecting unit **131**, and in a case where control is necessary, sets the content of control based on a predetermined algorithm set beforehand, and notifies the data generating unit **133**. For example, in a case where distance to an obstruction in the path of the vehicle **9**, vehicle speed, and so forth satisfy certain conditions, control content to bring the vehicle **9** to an emergency stop may be obtained. Also, for example, in a case where sensor information obtained from a sensor satisfies certain conditions, control content for adjusting the sensor may be obtained.

The data generating unit **133** generates control system data such as vehicle control data or the like in accordance with the control content notified thereto in a case where the control judging unit **132** has judged that traveling control of the vehicle **9** is necessary, and stores that control system data in the control system data transmission buffer. Note that the data generating unit **133** sets a CAN-ID in accordance with the control content notified thereto, attaches the CAN-ID to that vehicle control data or the like, and stores in the control system data transmission buffer. The data generating unit **133** generates information system data such as sensor control data or the like in accordance with the contents of control notified thereto in a case where the control judging unit **132** has judged that sensor control is necessary, and stores that information system data in the information system data transmission buffer.

Also, the data generating unit **133** sets a MAC address serving as a destination of sensor control data or the like in accordance with the control content notified thereto, attaches the MAC address to that sensor control data or the like, and stores in the information system data transmission buffer. The data generating unit **133** generates control system data by processing based on data relating to a CAN frame read out from the control system data reception buffer at the least (e.g., vehicle state data or the like), and generates information system data by processing based on data relating to an E-frame read out from the information system data reception buffer at the least (e.g., sensor information such as images or the like). Note that the data generating unit **133** may generate control system data or information system data by processing based on both vehicle state data and sensor information, for example.

The transmission unit **150** is configured including a frame constructing unit **151** that constructs frames in accordance with the communication protocols corresponding to each of the control system network **1** and information system network **2**. The transmission unit **150** transmits the control system data in the transmission buffer **140a** (control system data transmission buffer) that has not been transmitted yet, and the information data in the transmission buffer **140b** (information system data transmission buffer) that has not been transmitted yet. The transmission unit **150** uses the frame constructing unit **151** to transmit the data to the

16

network to which it should be transmitted, included in a frame corresponding to the network to which it should be transmitted. The network to which the information system data should be transmitted is the information system network **2**, and the network to which the control system data should be transmitted is the control system network **1**, but in a case where predetermined exception conditions are satisfied such that transmission cannot be performed to the control system network **1** (e.g., a case where an abnormality has been detected in at least part of the control system network **1** or the like), this is the information system network **2**.

That is to say, the transmission unit **150** performs transmission of information system data by sending out E-frames including that information system data to the information system network **2**. In a case where predetermined exception conditions are not satisfied, the transmission unit **150** performs transmission of CAN frames including that control system data by sending out onto the bus **30a** of the control system network **1**, and in a case where the predetermined exception conditions are satisfied, performs transmission of E-frames including that control system data by sending out onto the information system network **2**. CAN frames including control system data sent out onto the bus **30a** by the transmission unit **150** have been generated by, for example, including control system data in the data field of a CAN frame, and including the CAN-ID that had been attached to the control system data in the transmission buffer in the ID field of the CAN frame. An E-frame including information system data, that is sent out to the cable **20e** by the transmission unit **150**, is an E-frame where the payload includes, for example, identification flag information representing whether or not control system data to be transmitted to the control system network **1** is included, the identification flag information indicating that control system data is not included, and information system data, with the MAC address that had been attached to the information system data in the transmission buffer set as the destination MAC address. An E-frame including control system data, that is sent out to the cable **20e** by the transmission unit **150**, is an E-frame where the payload includes, for example, identification flag information representing whether or not control system data to be transmitted to the control system network **1** is included, the identification flag information indicating that control system data is included, and control system data, with a particular MAC address set beforehand (e.g., a broadcast address, etc.) set as the destination MAC address. Note that in E-frames transmitted by the transmission unit **150**, the identification flag information may be provided in the type in the header or the like, instead of the payload, and for example, a bit for identifying whether or not a global MAC address in the destination MAC address in the header may be used as identification flag information, and set to a value not that of a global MAC address, thereby indicating that control system data to be transmitted to the control system network **1** is included.

In a case of transmitting data of each of the control system data transmission buffer and information system data transmission buffer, the transmission unit **150** performs priority transmission control, where the priority type data that is one of the control system data (first-type data) and information system data (second-type data) is transmitted with higher propriety than non-priority type data that is the other data, based on priority information set in the degree-of-priority setting unit **160** (e.g., information for identifying the priority type data regarding which of control system data and information system data should be transmitted with priority,

or the like). Note that in one example of the present embodiment, priority information is set at the degree-of-priority setting unit **160** indicating that control system data should be transmitted with priority over the information system data. In a case where data has been transmitted from the transmission buffers **140a** and **140b** by the transmission unit **150**, that data is deleted from the transmission buffer, for example.

The degree-of-priority setting unit **160** sets and stores priority information indicating which of control system data and information system data to give priority to (which has higher priority). Note that the priority information may be set such that the control system data and information system data have the same degree of priority. The degree-of-priority setting unit **160** may set the priority information to be that set beforehand, or may set the priority information so as to be that based on the state of the vehicle **9** in the past, processing results of onboard devices, and so forth.

1.4 Configuration of Hub **200**

The hub **200** is configured including, for example, digital circuits such as a processor, memory, and so forth, analog circuits, communication circuits, and so forth, and has a function of transferring (relaying) frames received from one transmission path (bus or cable) to another transmission path.

FIG. **7** is a configuration diagram of the hub **200**. The hub **200** is configured including a reception unit **210a** (first reception unit), a reception unit **210b** (second reception unit), a reception buffer **220a** (first reception buffer), a reception buffer **220b** (second reception buffer), a selecting unit **230**, a transfer rule storing unit **231**, a transmission buffer **240a** (first transmission buffer), a transmission buffer **240b** (second transmission buffer), a transmission unit **250**, and a degree-of-priority setting unit **260**. These components are realized by communication circuits in the hub **200**, a processor or digital circuits executing programs stored in the memory, and so forth.

The reception buffer **220a**, reception buffer **220b**, transmission buffer **240a**, and transmission buffer **240b** are each configured of storage media such as memory or the like, and are FIFO buffers, for example. The reception buffer **220a** (first reception buffer) is also referred to as a control system data reception buffer, and the transmission buffer **240a** (first transmission buffer) is also referred to as a control system data transmission buffer. The reception buffer **220b** (second reception buffer) is also referred to as an information system data reception buffer, and the transmission buffer **240b** (second transmission buffer) is also referred to as an information system data transmission buffer.

The reception unit **210a** sequentially receives CAN frames from the bus **30a** of the control system network **1**. Each time a CAN frame is received, the reception unit **210a** confirms whether the CAN-ID of the received CAN frame is an ID that should be received, based on a reception ID list (see FIG. **6**), and if an ID that should be received, stores the contents of the CAN frame in the reception buffer **220a**. The contents of a CAN frame that the reception unit **210a** stores in the reception buffer **220a** is the CAN-ID and size (DLC) and so forth added to data (the contents of the data field). A reception ID list used by the hub **200** lists CAN-IDs of CAN frames including data that can be the object of transfer to the information system network **2** (e.g., vehicle state data and so forth), for example, and may have different content from the reception ID list used by the X-ECU **100**. If the CAN-ID of a received CAN frame is an ID not shown in the reception

ID list, the reception unit **210a** cancels reception of that CAN frame, and does not store the contents of that CAN frame in the reception buffer **220a**.

The reception unit **210b** sequentially receives E-frames from the cable **20f** of the information system network **2**, and each time an E-frame is received, the reception unit **210b** stores the contents of that E-frame in the reception buffer **220b**. The contents of an E-frame that the reception unit **210b** stores in the reception buffer **220b** is data (contents of the payload) to which a transmission source MAC address has been added, for example. For example, E-frames that have images and other data from various types of sensors such as the camera **300b**, LIDAR **300c**, GPS **300d**, and so forth, in the payloads thereof, are transmitted with the hub **200** as the destination, or are broadcast, and the reception unit **210b** receives these E-frames.

The transfer rule storing unit **231** stores transfer rule information that has been decided beforehand, in a storage medium such as memory or the like. FIG. **8** illustrates an example of transfer rule information. The transfer rule information correlates information of transfer sources and information of transfer destinations (addressees), as illustrated in FIG. **7**. The example in FIG. **7** shows that in a case where a CAN frame of CAN-ID 0x100 or 0x101 is received from CAN bus **1**, which indicates the bus **30a**, the hub **200** should transfer data that is the content of the CAN frame to a destination that is a device identified by MAC address "00:11:22:33:44:55" on the information system network **2**. This also shows that in a case where a CAN frame of CAN-ID 0x102 is received from CAN bus **1**, the hub **200** should transfer data that is the content of the CAN frame to a destination that is a device identified by MAC address "00:12:23:34:45:56" on the information system network **2**. This also shows that in a case of having received an E-frame of which the transmission source MAC address is "00:11:22:33:44:55", the hub **200** should attach a CAN-ID "0x300" to the data that is the content of that E-frame, and transfer with the CAN bus **1** as the destination.

The selecting unit **230** is configured including a transfer data generating unit **233**. The selecting unit **230** selects whether the destination of data that is the content of one of the reception buffer **220a** and reception buffer **220b** is the control system network **1** or the information system network **2**, based on transfer rule information. For example, attaching a transmission source MAC address or destination MAC address in the header of an E-frame that has been received, to data stored in a reception buffer based on the E-frame, enables the selecting unit **230** to select the destination of the data by the transmission source MAC address or destination MAC address, and transfer rule information. Also, attaching a CAN-ID of a CAN frame that has been received to data stored in a reception buffer based on the CAN frame enables the selecting unit **230** to select the destination of the data from the CAN-ID and the transfer rule information.

In a case of having selected the control system network **1** as the destination of data that is the content of one of the reception buffer **220a** and reception buffer **220b**, the selecting unit **230** generates data to be transferred (transmitted) by the transfer data generating unit **233** based on that data and stores it in the transmission buffer **240a** (control system data transmission buffer), and in a case of having selected the information system network **2**, generates data to be transferred (transmitted) by the transfer data generating unit **233** based on that data and stores it in the transmission buffer **240b** (information system data transmission buffer). The transfer data generating unit **233** can generate data the same as the data that is the content of the reception buffer, for

example, as data to be transmitted. In a case where the control system network **1** has been selected as the destination of data that is the content of the information system data reception buffer, but the data is of a large size that cannot be stored in the data field of a CAN frame, the transfer data generating unit **233** can split that data into multiple data (data of a size that can be stored in the data field of a CAN frame), generate the multiple data as the result of splitting as data to be transmitted, and store in the control system data transmission buffer. At the time of storing data in the transmission buffer, the transfer data generating unit **233** can attach information indicating the destination and so forth (transfer destination information in the transfer rule information, etc.) to that data. Note that transferring (relaying) of frames by the hub **200** is reception and transmission of data (information) relating to frames, and can involve conversion of communication method, frame format, and so forth, corresponding to the communication protocol used at the transmission path that is the transfer destination. The hub **200** also can transmit one or multiple frames to one or multiple transmission paths in accordance with one or multiple frames received from one or multiple transmission paths, as transfer of frames among transmission paths.

When selecting the destination of data each time reading out data from one of the reception buffer **220a** and reception buffer **220b**, and reading out the data, the selecting unit **230** performs priority readout control, where the contents of a priority reception buffer that is one of the control system data reception buffer and information system data reception buffer are read out with higher propriety than the contents a non-priority reception buffer that is the other buffer, based on priority information set in the degree-of-priority setting unit **260** (e.g., information for identifying the priority reception buffer from which readout should be performed with priority, or the like). The degree-of-priority setting unit **260** stores priority information in a region of a storage medium such as memory. Note that in one example of the present embodiment, priority information is set at the degree-of-priority setting unit **260** indicating that data of the control system data reception buffer should be read out with priority over the information system data reception buffer. In a case where data has been read out from the reception buffers **220a** and **220b**, that data is deleted from the reception buffer.

The transmission unit **250** is configured including a frame constructing unit **251** that constructs frames in accordance with the communication protocols corresponding to each of the control system network **1** and information system network **2**. The transmission unit **250** transmits the yet-to-be-transmitted data in the transmission buffer **240a** (control system data transmission buffer), and the yet-to-be-transmitted data in the transmission buffer **240b** (information system data transmission buffer). The transmission unit **250** uses the frame constructing unit **251** to transmit the data to the network to which it should be transmitted, included in a frame corresponding to the network to which it should be transmitted. The network to which the data in the system data transmission buffer should be transmitted is the information system network **2**, and the network to which the data in the control system data transmission buffer should be transmitted normally is the control system network **1**, but in a case where predetermined exception conditions are satisfied such that transmission cannot be performed to the control system network **1** (e.g., a case where an abnormality has been detected in at least part of the control system network **1** or the like), this is the information system network **2**. That is to say, the transmission unit **250** performs transmission of data in the information system data trans-

mission buffer by sending out E-frames including that data to the information system network **2**. In a case where predetermined exception conditions are not satisfied, the transmission unit **250** performs transmission of CAN frames including that data in the control system data transmission buffer by sending out onto the bus **30a** of the control system network **1**, and in a case where the predetermined exception conditions are satisfied, performs transmission of E-frames including that data by sending out onto the information system network **2**. CAN frames including data have been generated by, for example, including data to be sent out to the bus **30a** by the transmission unit **250** in the data field of a CAN frame, and including the CAN-ID that had been attached to the data in the transmission buffer in the ID field of the CAN frame. An E-frame including data to be sent out to the cable **20f** by the transmission unit **250**, is an E-frame where the payload includes, for example, identification flag information representing whether or not data to be transmitted to the control system network **1** is included, the identification flag information indicating that data to be transmitted to the control system network **1** is not included, and information system data, with the MAC address that had been attached to the information system data in the transmission buffer set as the destination MAC address. An E-frame including data to be sent out to the cable **20f** by the transmission unit **250**, is an E-frame where the payload includes, for example, identification flag information representing whether or not data to be transmitted to the control system network **1** is included, the identification flag information indicating that data to be transmitted to the control system network **1** is included, and control system data, with a particular MAC address set beforehand (e.g., a broadcast address, etc.) set as the destination MAC address. Note that in E-frames transmitted by the transmission unit **250**, the identification flag information may be provided in the type in the header or the like, instead of the payload, and for example, a bit for identifying whether or not a global MAC address in the destination MAC address in the header may be used as identification flag information, and set to a value not that of a global MAC address, thereby indicating that control system data to be transmitted to the control system network **1** is included.

In a case of transmitting data of each of the control system data transmission buffer and information system data transmission buffer, the transmission unit **250** performs priority transmission control, where the yet-to-be-transmitted data of a priority transmission buffer that is one of the control system data transmission buffer and information system data reception buffer are transmitted with higher propriety than yet-to-be-transmitted data of a non-priority transmission buffer that is the other buffer, based on priority information set in the degree-of-priority setting unit **260** (e.g., information for identifying the priority transmission buffer from the control system data transmission buffer and information system data transmission buffer, regarding which data should be transmitted with priority, or the like). The priority information is information where a priority transmission buffer and priority reception buffer have been correlated, such as for example, the priority reception buffer is the control system data reception buffer in a case where the priority transmission buffer is the control system data transmission buffer, and the priority reception buffer is the information system data reception buffer in a case where the priority transmission buffer is the information system data transmission buffer. Note that in one example of the present embodiment, priority information is set at the degree-of-priority setting unit **260** indicating the control system data

transmission buffer is the transmission buffer of which data should be transmitted with priority over the information system data transmission buffer. In a case where data has been transmitted from the transmission buffers **240a** and **240b** by the transmission unit **250**, that data is deleted from the transmission buffer, for example.

The degree-of-priority setting unit **260** sets and stores priority information indicating which of the control system data reception buffer (or control system data transmission buffer) and information system data reception buffer (or information system data transmission buffer) to give priority to (which has higher priority). Note that the priority information may be set such that the buffers have the same degree of priority. The degree-of-priority setting unit **260** may set the priority information to be that set beforehand, or may set the priority information so as to be that based on the state of the vehicle **9** in the past, processing results of onboard devices, and so forth.

1.5 Operations of X-ECU **100**

FIG. **9** is a flowchart illustrating an example of data processing by the X-ECU **100**. The X-ECU **100** sequentially stores the contents of frames sequentially received by the reception unit **110a** and reception unit **110b** from transmission paths in the reception buffer **120a** (control system data reception buffer) and reception buffer **120b** (information system data reception buffer). The generating unit **130** and transmission unit **150** perform the data processing illustrated in FIG. **9**, in parallel with the reception and storage by the reception units **110a** and **110b**. As this data processing, the X-ECU **100** performs reception data readout processing (step **S1**) and transmission data generating processing (step **S2**) primarily by the generating unit **130**, and data transmission processing (step **S3**) primarily by the transmission unit **150**. This data processing is performed repetitively.

First, the reception data readout processing (step **S1**) will be described with reference to FIG. **10**. Assumption will be made here that data stored in the reception buffers **120a** and **120b** by the reception units **110a** and **110b** is deleted from the reception buffers upon being read out by the generating unit **130**.

The generating unit **130** of the X-ECU **100** confirms whether data is stored in the control system data reception buffer (step **S101**), and confirms whether data is stored in the information system data reception buffer (step **S102**). In a case where no data is stored in either of the reception buffers, the generating unit **130** repeats the processing of steps **S101** and **S102** (step **S103**).

If data is stored in both of the control system data reception buffer and information system data reception buffer (step **S104**), the generating unit **130** confirms whether there is data present in the reception buffers that has not been read out for a certain amount of time (step **S105**). Confirmation in step **S105** is performed based on calculating the unread time of data (time not read out), and confirming whether or not the unread time has exceeded a certain threshold value, for example.

In a case where there is no data that has not been read out for a certain amount of time as the result of the confirmation in step **S105**, the generating unit **130** references priority information, confirms readout from which reception buffer should be given priority, and in a case where the degree of priority is higher for readout from the control system data reception buffer (step **S106**) data is read out from the control system data reception buffer (step **S107**). In a case where the degree of priority is higher for readout from the information

system data reception buffer (step **S108**), the generating unit **130** reads out data from the information system data reception buffer (step **S109**). In a case where the degree of priority is the same, the generating unit **130** reads out the oldest data of the data in both reception buffers (step **S110**). Note that in an example where the priority information is set such that readout is performed from the control system data reception buffer with priority (i.e., the control system data reception buffer is set as a priority reception buffer where the degree of priority is high, and the information system data reception buffer is set as a non-priority reception buffer where the degree of priority is low), the generating unit **130** reads out data from the control system data reception buffer in step **S107** in a case of having confirmed in step **S105** that there is no data that has not been read out for a certain amount of time.

In a case where there is data that has not been read out for a certain amount of time as the result of the confirmation in step **S105**, the generating unit **130** reads out that data (step **S110**). Also, in a case where confirmation is made in step **S104** that data is stored in only one of the control system data reception buffer and information system data reception buffer, the generating unit **130** reads out the oldest data in the one reception buffer (step **S110**).

Although description has been made there that data read out by the generating unit **130** is deleted from the reception buffers, data may be managed in the reception buffers by a method other than deletion, as long as it can be distinguished from data that has not been read out (unread data). Regardless of which method is used to manage data, the generating unit **130** performs priority readout control where data is read out of the priority reception buffer that is one of the control system data reception buffer and information system data reception buffer with priority, as compared to the non-priority buffer that is the other. As for the priority readout control, the generating unit **130** repeatedly confirms the reception buffer **120a** (control system data reception buffer) and reception buffer **120b** (information system data reception buffer), and in a case where unread data exists in the control system data reception buffer and unread data exists in the information system data reception buffer when confirming, reads out the unread data in the priority reception buffer in a case where the readout time of unread data in the non-priority reception buffer does not exceed a certain threshold value, and reads out the unread data in the non-priority reception buffer in a case where the readout time of unread data exceeds the certain threshold value. Also, when confirming the reception buffers, in a case where there is unread data in the control system data reception buffer and there is no unread data in the information system data reception buffer, the generating unit **130** reads out the unread data in the information system data reception buffer. Also, when confirming the reception buffers, in a case where there is no unread data in the control system data reception buffer and there is unread data in the information system data reception buffer, the generating unit **130** reads out the unread data in the control system data reception buffer. The above-described certain threshold value may be decided based on the state of the vehicle **9** in the past, the processing results of onboard devices, and so forth. It is suitable to set the above-described certain threshold value to an appropriate time that is longer than the time required to read out one worth of data in the priority reception buffer, in order to prevent a situation where no data is read out from the non-priority reception buffer at all due to consecutive readout of data from the priority reception buffer in the priority readout control.

Next, transmission data generating processing (step S2) will be described with reference to FIG. 11. The generating unit 130 obtains vehicle state (step S201), or obtains sensor information (step S202), based on data read out from one of the reception buffers. Next, the generating unit 130 performs detection regarding various types of items relating to the surrounding environment of the vehicle 9 and the state of the vehicle 9 and so forth, based on the obtained vehicle state or sensor information (step S203). Note that when performing detection in step S203 relating to the environment, based on the vehicle state and sensor information and so forth obtained based on data read out from one of the reception buffers in step S201 or step S202, the generating unit 130 may further perform detection by referencing one or multiple data read out from the reception buffers during a certain previous time period (e.g., within several seconds) or the like.

Next, the generating unit 130 judges whether or not traveling control of the vehicle 9 is necessary (step S204), based on the detection results in step S203. In a case of having judged that traveling control of the vehicle 9 is necessary, the generating unit 130 generates vehicle control data as control system data (first-type data) (step S205), sets a CAN-ID that can operate as a degree of priority of a CAN frame, to be attached to this vehicle control data (step S206), and writes this control system data to the transmission buffer 140a (control system data transmission buffer) (step S207). In a case of having judged that traveling control of the vehicle 9 is unnecessary in step S204, the generating unit 130 skips the processing of steps S205 through S207.

Next, the generating unit 130 judges whether or not control of sensors installed in the vehicle 9 is necessary, based on the detection results in step S203 (step S208). In a case of having judged that sensor control is necessary, the generating unit 130 generates sensor control data as information system data (second-type data) (step S209), sets destination information such as a MAC address or the like serving as the destination of the sensor control data, to be attached to this sensor control data (step S210), and writes this information system data to the transmission buffer 140b (information system data transmission buffer) (step S211). In a case of having judged that sensor control is unnecessary in step S208, the generating unit 130 skips the processing of steps S209 through S211.

Next, the data transmission processing (step S3) will be described with reference to FIGS. 12 and 13. When the data stored in the transmission buffers 140a and 140b is read out by the transmission unit 150 and transmitted, the data is deleted from the transmission buffers.

The transmission unit 150 of the X-ECU 100 confirms whether there is data stored in the control system data transmission buffer (step S301), and confirms whether there is data stored in the information system data transmission buffer (step S302). While there is no data stored in either of the transmission buffers, the transmission unit 150 repeats the processing of step S301 and step S302 (step S303).

If data is stored in both of the control system data transmission buffer and information system data transmission buffer (step S304), the transmission unit 150 confirms whether there is data in the transmission buffers that has not been transmitted for a certain amount of time (step S305). Confirmation in step S305 is performed based on calculating the non-transmission time of data (time not transmitted), and confirming whether or not the non-transmission time has exceeded a predetermined threshold value, for example.

In a case where there is no data that has not been transmitted for a certain amount of time as the result of the

confirmation in step S305, the transmission unit 150 references priority information, confirms transmission from which transmission buffer should be given priority, and in a case where the degree of priority to transmit the control system data, i.e., the degree of priority for transmission of data from the control system data transmission buffer, is higher (step S306), control system data is read out from the control system data transmission buffer, and the data is identified as being the object of transmission (step S307). In a case where the degree of priority to transmit the information system data, i.e., the degree of priority for transmission of data from the information system data transmission buffer, is higher (step S308), the transmission unit 150 reads out information system data from the information system data transmission buffer, and identifies this data as being the object of transmission (step S309). In a case where the degree of priority is the same, the transmission unit 150 reads out the oldest data of the data in both transmission buffers and identifies it as being the object of transmission (step S310). Note that in an example where the priority information is set such that transmission is performed from the control system data (data within the control system data transmission buffer) with priority (i.e., the control system data is set as priority type data where the degree of priority is high, and the information system data is set as a non-priority type data where the degree of priority is low, or the control system data transmission buffer is set as a priority transmission buffer where the degree of priority is high, and the information system data transmission buffer is set as a non-priority transmission buffer where the degree of priority is low), and in a case of having confirmed in step S305 that there is no data that has not been transmitted for a certain amount of time, the transmission unit 150 reads out control system data from the control system data transmission buffer, and identifies this data as being the object of transmission in step S307.

In a case where there is data that has not been transmitted for a certain amount of time as the result of the confirmation in step S305, the transmission unit 150 reads out that data and identifies as being the object of transmission (step S310). Also, in a case where confirmation is made in step S304 that data is stored in only one of the control system data transmission buffer and information system data transmission buffer, the transmission unit 150 reads out the oldest data in the one transmission buffer and identifies it as being the object of transmission (step S310).

Once data that is the object of transmission has been identified in step S307, S309, or S310, the transmission unit 150 determines whether the object of transmission is control system data or information system data (step S311), and if control system data, determines whether or not predetermined exception conditions where transmission cannot be made to the control system network 1 are satisfied (e.g., whether or not an abnormality has been detected at part of the control system network 1) (step S312).

In a case where determination is made that the predetermined exception conditions are satisfied due to an abnormality having been detected at part of the control system network 1 or the like in step S312, the transmission unit 150 constructs an E-frame including control system data identified as being the object of transmission, and transmits this E-frame to the information system network 2 (step S313). On the other hand, in a case where determination is made that the predetermined exception conditions are not satisfied in step S312, the transmission unit 150 constructs a CAN frame including the control system data that has been

identified as the object of transmission, and transmits this CAN frame to the control system network **1** (step S314).

In a case where determination has been made in step S311 that the object of transmission is information system data, the transmission unit **150** constructs an E-frame including the information system data identified as being the object of transmission, and transmits this E-frame to the information system network **2** (step S315).

Although description has been made here that data read out and transmitted by the transmission unit **150** is deleted from the transmission buffers, data may be managed in the transmission buffers by a method other than deletion, as long as it can be distinguished from data that has not been transmitted (yet-to-be-transmitted data). Regardless of which method is used to manage data, the transmission unit **150** performs priority transmission control where priority type data that is one of the control system data and information system data is sent with priority, as compared to the non-priority type data that is the other. As for the priority transmission control, the transmission unit **150** repeatedly confirms the transmission buffer **140a** (control system data transmission buffer) and transmission buffer **140b** (information system data transmission buffer), and in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted control system data exists in the control system data transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted information system data exists in the information system data transmission buffer when confirming, transmits the priority type data in a case where the non-transmission time of the non-priority type data does not exceed a predetermined threshold value, and transmits the non-priority type data in a case where the non-transmission time exceeds the predetermined threshold value. Also, when confirming the transmission buffers, in a case where there is yet-to-be-transmitted control system data in the control system data priority type buffer and there is yet-to-be-transmitted information system data in the information system data transmission buffer, the transmission unit **150** transmits the control system data. Also, when confirming the transmission buffers, in a case where there is no yet-to-be-transmitted control system data in the control system data transmission buffer and there is yet-to-be-transmitted information system data in the information system data transmission buffer, the transmission unit **150** transmits the information system data. The above-described predetermined threshold value may be decided based on the state of the vehicle **9** in the past, the processing results of onboard devices, and so forth. It is suitable to set the above-described certain threshold value to an appropriate time that is longer than the time required to transmit one worth of priority type data, in order to prevent a situation where no priority type data is transmitted at all due to consecutive transmission of priority type data in the priority transmission buffer.

1.6 Operations of Hub **200**

FIG. **14** is a flowchart illustrating an example of data processing by the hub **200**. The hub **200** sequentially stores the contents of frames sequentially received by the reception unit **210a** and reception unit **210b** from transmission paths in the reception buffer **220a** (control system data reception buffer) and reception buffer **220b** (information system data reception buffer). The selecting unit **230** and transmission unit **250** perform the data transfer processing illustrated in FIG. **14**, in parallel with the reception and storage by the reception units **210a** and **210b**. As this data transfer processing, the hub **200** performs reception data readout processing (step S1) and transfer data generating processing

(step S4) primarily by the selecting unit **230**, and data transmission processing (step S3) primarily by the transmission unit **250**. This data transferring processing is performed repetitively. Note that the reception data readout processing by the selecting unit **230** is the same as the reception data readout processing by the generating unit **130** of the X-ECU **100** (FIG. **10**), and the data transmission processing by the transmission unit **250** is the same as the data transmission processing by the transmission unit **150** of the X-ECU **100** (FIGS. **12** and **13**), so description of this processing will be omitted as appropriate.

Once data stored in the reception buffers **220a** and **220b** by the reception units **210a** and **210b** of the hub **200** has been read out by the selecting unit **230**, that data is deleted from the reception buffers.

The selecting unit **230** of the hub **200** repeatedly confirms whether there is data stored in the control system data reception buffer and information system data reception buffer, as illustrated in FIG. **10** (steps S101 through S103).

When data is stored in both reception buffers (step S104), the selecting unit **230** confirms whether there is data in a reception buffer that has not been read out for a certain amount of time (step S105).

In a case where there is no data that has not been read out for a certain amount of time as the result of the confirmation in step S105, the selecting unit **230** references priority information, and in a case where the degree of priority is higher for readout from the control system data reception buffer (step S106) data is read out from the control system data reception buffer (step S107). In a case where the degree of priority is higher for readout from the information system data reception buffer (step S108), the selecting unit **230** reads out data from the information system data reception buffer (step S109).

In a case where there is data that has not been read out for a certain amount of time as the result of the confirmation in step S105, the selecting unit **230** reads out that data (step S110). Also, in a case where confirmation is made in step S104 that data is stored in only one of the control system data reception buffer and information system data reception buffer, the oldest data in the one reception buffer is read out (step S110).

Although description has been made here that data read out by the selecting unit **230** is deleted from the reception buffers, data may be managed in the reception buffers by a method other than deletion, as long as it can be distinguished from data that has not been read out (unread data). Regardless of which method is used to manage data, the selecting unit **230** performs priority readout control where data is read out from the priority reception buffer that is one of the control system data reception buffer and information system data reception buffer with priority, as compared to the non-priority reception buffer that is the other. As for the priority readout control, the selecting unit **230** repeatedly confirms the reception buffer **220a** (control system data reception buffer) and reception buffer **220b** (information system data reception buffer), and in a case where unread data exists in the control system data reception buffer and unread data exists in the information system data reception buffer when confirming, reads out the unread data in the priority reception buffer when the readout time of unread data in the non-priority reception buffer does not exceed a certain threshold value, and reads out the unread data in the non-priority reception buffer when the readout time exceeds the certain threshold value. Also, when confirming the reception buffers, in a case where there is unread data in the control system data reception buffer and there is no unread

data in the information system data reception buffer, the selecting unit **230** reads out the unread data in the control system data reception buffer. Also, when confirming the reception buffers, in a case where there is no unread data in the control system data reception buffer and there is unread data in the information system data reception buffer, the selecting unit **230** reads out the unread data in the information system data reception buffer.

Next, the transfer data generating processing (step **S4**) by the selecting unit **230** will be described with reference to FIG. **15**. Regarding the data read out from one of the reception buffers, the selecting unit **230** selects whether the destination (transfer destination) of that data is the control system network **1** or the information system network **2**, based on transfer rule information (step **S401**).

Next, in a case where the data regarding which the destination has been selected is data read out from the information system data reception buffer (step **S402**), and the information system network **2** has been selected as the destination (step **S403**), the selecting unit **230** generates transfer data (data to be transferred) including that data, based on that data (step **S404**), and writes the generated data to the transmission buffer **240b** (information system data transmission buffer) (step **S405**). In a case where the control system network **1** has been selected as the destination of data that has been read out from the information system data reception buffer in step **S403**, and that data is of a size that cannot be stored in a CAN data frame, the selecting unit **230** splits the data into multiple data (step **S406**). The selecting unit **230** then generates transfer data to include each of the data obtained as a result of the splitting (step **S407**), and writes each generated transfer data to the transmission buffer **240a** (control system data transmission buffer) (step **S408**).

In a case where determination is made in step **S402** that the data regarding which the destination has been selected is data read out from the control system data reception buffer, and the control system network **1** has been selected as the destination (step **S409**), the selecting unit **230** generates transfer data including that data, based on that data (step **S410**), and writes the generated data to the transmission buffer **240a** (control system data transmission buffer) (step **S411**). When the destination of the data read out from the control system data reception buffer is selected to be the information system network **2** in step **S409**, the selecting unit **230** generates transfer data including that data (step **S412**), and writes the generated transfer data to the transmission buffer **240b** (information system data transmission buffer) (step **S413**).

Next, the data transmission processing by the transmission unit **250** (step **S3**) will be described with reference to FIGS. **12** and **13**. When the data stored in the transmission buffers **240a** and **240b** is read out by the transmission unit **250** and transmitted, the data is deleted from the transmission buffers.

The transmission unit **250** of the hub **200** repeatedly confirms whether there is data stored in the control system data transmission buffer and information system data transmission buffer (steps **S301** through **S303**).

If data is stored in both of the transmission buffers (step **S304**), the transmission unit **250** confirms whether there is data in the transmission buffers that has not been transmitted for a certain amount of time (step **S305**).

In a case where there is no data that has not been transmitted for a certain amount of time as the result of the confirmation in step **S305**, the transmission unit **250** references priority information, confirms transmission of data from which transmission buffer should be given priority, and

in a case where the degree of priority is higher for the control system data transmission buffer (step **S306**), data is read out from the control system data transmission buffer, and this data is identified as being the object of transmission (step **S307**). In a case where the degree of priority is higher for the information system data transmission buffer (step **S308**), the transmission unit **250** reads out data from the information system data transmission buffer, and identifies this data as being the object of transmission (step **S309**). Note that in an example where the priority information is set such that the control system data transmission buffer is the priority transmission buffer with a high degree of priority, and the information system data transmission buffer is the non-priority transmission buffer with a low degree of priority, and in a case of having confirmed in step **S305** that there is no data that has not been transmitted for a certain amount of time, the transmission unit **250** reads out control system data from the control system data transmission buffer, and identifies this data as being the object of transmission in step **S307**.

In a case where there is data that has not been transmitted for a certain amount of time as the result of the confirmation in step **S305**, the transmission unit **250** reads out that data and identifies as being the object of transmission (step **S310**). Also, in a case where confirmation is made in step **S304** that data is stored in only one of the control system data transmission buffer and information system data transmission buffer, the transmission unit **250** reads out the oldest data in the one transmission buffer and identifies this as being the object of transmission (step **S310**).

Once data that is the object of transmission has been identified in step **S307**, **S309**, or **S310**, the transmission unit **250** determines whether the object of transmission is data of the control system data transmission buffer or data of the information system data transmission buffer (step **S311**), and if data of the control system data transmission buffer, determines whether or not predetermined exception conditions where transmission cannot be made to the control system network **1** are satisfied (step **S312**).

In a case where determination is made that the predetermined exception conditions are satisfied due to an abnormality having been detected at part of the control system network **1** or the like in step **S312**, the transmission unit **250** constructs an E-frame including data identified as being the object of transmission, and transmits this E-frame to the information system network **2** (step **S313**). On the other hand, in a case where determination is made that the predetermined exception conditions are not satisfied in step **S312**, the transmission unit **250** constructs a CAN frame including the data that has been identified as the object of transmission, and transmits this CAN frame to the control system network **1** (step **S314**).

In a case where determination has been made in step **S311** that the object of transmission is data of the information system data transmission buffer, the transmission unit **250** constructs an E-frame including the data identified as being the object of transmission, and transmits this E-frame to the information system network **2** (step **S315**).

Although description has been made here that data read out and transmitted by the transmission unit **250** is deleted from the transmission buffers, data may be managed in the transmission buffers by a method other than deletion, as long as it can be distinguished from data that has not been transmitted (yet-to-be-transmitted data). Regardless of which method is used to manage data, the transmission unit **250** performs priority transmission control where data is transmitted from the priority transmission buffer that is one

of the control system data transmission buffer and information system data transmission buffer with priority, as compared to the non-priority transmission buffer that is the other. As for the priority transmission control, the transmission unit **250** repeatedly confirms the transmission buffer **240a** (control system data transmission buffer) and transmission buffer **240b** (information system data transmission buffer), and in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted data exists in the control system data transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted data exists in the information system data transmission buffer when confirming, transmits the data in the priority transmission buffer in a case where the non-transmission time of the non-priority transmission buffer does not exceed a predetermined threshold value, and transmits the data in the non-priority transmission buffer in a case where the non-transmission time exceeds the predetermined threshold value. Also, when confirming the transmission buffers, in a case where there is yet-to-be-transmitted data in the control system data transmission buffer and there is yet-to-be-transmitted data in the information system data transmission buffer, the transmission unit **250** transmits the data in that control system data transmission buffer. Also, when confirming the transmission buffers, in a case where there is no yet-to-be-transmitted data in the control system data transmission buffer and there is yet-to-be-transmitted data in the information system data transmission buffer, the transmission unit **250** transmits the data in that information system data transmission buffer.

1.7 Processing Sequence by ADAS Function of X-ECU **100**

FIG. **16** illustrates an example of a processing sequence by the ADAS function of the X-ECU **100**. The X-ECU **100** receives a CAN frame indicating vehicle state data that the C-ECU **500a** has transmitted over the control system network **1** (step **S1001**), and receives an E-frame indicating a taken image that is sensor information, transmitted by the camera **300b** on the information system network **2** (step **S1002**).

The X-ECU **100** performs detection of the surrounding environment of the vehicle **9** based on the vehicle state data and taken image (step **S1003**), and depending on the results of detection, generates vehicle control data for example (step **S1004**), and transmits the vehicle control data to the bus **30a** of the control system network **1** (step **S1005**).

1.8 Communication Sequence Relating to Transfer Functions of Hub **200**

FIG. **17** illustrates an example of a communication sequence relating to the transfer functions of the hub **200**. Assumption will be made here that the degree of priority of the control system data reception buffer (or control system data transmission buffer) is set higher than the information system data reception buffer (or information system data transmission buffer) as priority information at the hub **200**.

The hub **200** receives an E-frame including sensor information from the information system network **2** (step **S1011**), and receives a CAN frame including vehicle state data from the control system network **1** (step **S1012**).

The hub **200** confirms the reception buffers **220a** and **220b**, reads out vehicle state data from the reception buffer **220a** with priority, selects the information system network **2** as being the destination, and transmits the E-frame including that vehicle state data to the information system network **2**

(step **S1013**). The hub **200** also receives a CAN frame including the vehicle state data from the control system network **1** (step **S1014**).

The hub **200** confirms the reception buffers **220a** and **220b**, reads out vehicle state data from the reception buffer **220a** with priority, selects the information system network **2** as being the destination, and transmits the E-frame including that vehicle state data to the information system network **2** (step **S1015**).

The hub **200** confirms the reception buffers **220a** and **220b**, and since there is no data in the reception buffer **220a**, reads out sensor information from the reception buffer **220b**, selects the destination as being the control system network **1**, and transmits a CAN frame including that sensor information to the control system network **1** (step **S1016**).

1.9 Advantages of First Embodiment

In the onboard network system **10** according to the first embodiment, the X-ECU **100** that is an ECU connected to both the first network (control system network **1**) and second network (information system network **2**) that have different communication protocols from each other reads out data from a reception buffer from one of the networks with priority, or performs transmission of data from a transmission buffer of which the destination is one of the networks, in accordance with priority information. Also, the hub **200** connected to both networks reads out data from a reception buffer from one of the networks with priority, or performs transmission of data from a transmission buffer of which the destination is one of the networks, in accordance with priority information. Accordingly, the order of priority of processing based on data readout or transmission processing or the like can be made to correspond to the importance or the like of data transmitted over the networks. Accordingly, transmission of data relating to traveling control of the vehicle **9** can be given priority over transmission of image data and so forth, for example, and a situation where transmission of large-sized data, such as image data and so forth, adversely affects safe traveling of the vehicle **9** or the like, can be prevented.

Also, in the onboard network system **10** according to the first embodiment, the X-ECU **100** or hub **200** has a function where, in a case where determination is made that predetermined exception conditions are satisfied by an abnormality being detected at a part of the control system network **1** or the like, an E-frame including the data to be transmitted to the control system network **1** and also including identification flag information to that effect is constructed, and the E-frame is transmitted to the information system network **2**. There can be cases where multiple network paths are secured in the onboard network **11**, so even if there is an abnormality in part of the control system network **1**, there is a possibility that the X-ECU **100** or hub **200** will be able to transmit data to the device that is the final destination via the information system network **2**. As multiple relay devices connecting the control system network **1** and information system network **2** can exist in the onboard network system **10**, an arrangement may be made where one of the relay devices distinguishes identification flag information of an E-frame, and in a case where the E-frame includes information that should be transmitted to the control system network **1**, that E-frame may be subjected to protocol conversion and transferred to the control system network **1**. Note that even in a case of having detected that there is an abnormality at part of the information system network **2**, the X-ECU **100** or hub **200** do not transmit data, of which the

destination is the information system network **2**, to the control system network **1**. The reason is that data to be transmitted to the information system network **2** is generally large in data size, so transmitting this to the control system network **1** would cause delay in transmission of vehicle control data and so forth on the control system network **1** due to congestion.

1.10 Modification of First Embodiment

The above-described X-ECU **100** (or hub **200**) may perform reception data readout processing (step **S1a**) illustrated in FIG. **18**, instead of the reception data readout processing (step **S1**) by the generating unit **130** (or selecting unit **230**) illustrated in FIG. **10**.

The reception data readout processing in FIG. **18** is a modification where the step **S105** in the reception data readout processing in FIG. **10** has been changed to step **S105a**.

In step **S105**, the generating unit **130** (or selecting unit **230**) confirms whether there is data present in the reception buffers that has not been read out for a certain amount of time, but in step **S105a**, confirmation is made regarding whether a certain quantity of data has already been read out from the reception buffer of which the degree of priority is high (priority reception buffer).

Thus, the generating unit **130** of the X-ECU **100** performs priority readout control where data is read out from a priority reception buffer that is one of the control system data reception buffer and the information system data reception buffer is given priority over a non-priority reception buffer that is the other, as follows for example. That is to say, the generating unit **130** repeatedly confirms the reception buffer **120a** (control system data reception buffer) and reception buffer **120b** (information system data reception buffer), and in a case where unread data is present in the control system data reception buffer and also unread data is present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming, reads a certain quantity of unread data out from the priority reception buffer, and thereafter reads out one unread data from the non-priority reception buffer. Also, in a case where unread data is present in the control system data reception buffer but there is no unread data present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming the reception buffers, the generating unit **130** reads out the unread data in the control system data reception buffer. Also, in a case where there is no unread data present in the control system data reception buffer but unread data is present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming the reception buffers, the generating unit **130** reads out the unread data in the information system data reception buffer.

Also, the selecting unit **230** of the hub **200** performs priority readout control where data is read out from a priority reception buffer that is one of the control system data reception buffer and the information system data reception buffer is given priority over a non-priority reception buffer that is the other, as follows for example. That is to say, the selecting unit **230** repeatedly confirms the reception buffer **220a** (control system data reception buffer) and reception buffer **220b** (information system data reception buffer), and in a case where unread data is present in the control system data reception buffer and also unread data is present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming, reads a certain quantity of unread data out from the priority reception buffer, and thereafter reads out one unread data from the non-priority reception buffer. Also, in a case where unread data is present in the control system data reception

buffer but there is no unread data present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming the reception buffers, the selecting unit **230** reads out the unread data in the control system data reception buffer. Also, in a case where there is no unread data present in the control system data reception buffer but unread data is present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming the reception buffers, the selecting unit **230** reads out the unread data in the information system data reception buffer.

The above-described certain quantity may be decided based on the state of the vehicle **9** in the past, processing results of onboard devices, and so forth. The predetermined quantity is described above may be decided to be, for example, a quantity greater than one worth of the data in the priority reception buffer (e.g., a count of two or more data when expressing the quantity by a count, or a data amount that is twice or more the size of one worth when expressing the quantity by data amount), in order to prevent a situation where no data is read out at all from the non-priority reception buffer due to consecutive readout of data from the priority reception buffer in priority reception control.

Also, the above-described X-ECU **100** (or hub **200**) may perform data transmission processing (step **S3a**) illustrated in FIGS. **19** and **13**, instead of the data transmission processing (step **S3**) exemplarily illustrated in FIGS. **12** and **13** that is carried out by the transmission unit **150** (or transmission unit **250**).

The data transmission processing in FIGS. **19** and **13** is a modification where step **S305** in the data transmission processing in FIGS. **12** and **13** has been replaced by step **S305a**.

In step **S305**, the transmission unit **150** (or transmission unit **250**) confirms whether there is data present in the transmission buffers that has not been transmitted for a certain amount of time, but in step **S305a**, confirmation is made regarding whether a certain quantity of data (priority type data) has already been transmitted from the transmission buffer of which the degree of priority is high (priority reception buffer).

Thus, the transmission unit **150** of the X-ECU **100** performs priority transmission control where a priority type data that is one of the one of the control system data and information system data is transmitted with priority over non-priority type data that is the other, as follows for example. That is to say, the transmission unit **150** repeatedly confirms the transmission buffer **140a** and transmission buffer **140b**, and in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted control system data is present in the transmission buffer **140a** and also yet-to-be-transmitted information system data is present in the transmission buffer **140b** when confirming, transmits a certain quantity of priority type data of that control system data and information system data, and thereafter transmits one non-priority type data. Also, in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted control system data is present in the transmission buffer **140a** but there is no yet-to-be-transmitted information system data present in the transmission buffer **140b** when confirming the transmission buffers, the transmission unit **150** transmits that control system data. Also, in a case where there is no yet-to-be-transmitted control system data present in the transmission buffer **140a** but yet-to-be-transmitted data is present in the transmission buffer **140b** when confirming the transmission buffers, the transmission unit **150** transmits that information system data.

Also, the transmission unit **250** of the hub **200** performs priority transmission control where a priority type data that is one of the control system data and information system

data is transmitted with priority over non-priority type data that is the other, as follows for example. That is to say, the transmission unit **250** repeatedly confirms the transmission buffer **240a** and transmission buffer **240b**, and in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted data is present in the transmission buffer **240a** and also yet-to-be-transmitted data is present in the transmission buffer **240b** when confirming, transmits a certain quantity of data in the priority transmission buffer, and thereafter transmits one data from the non-priority transmission buffer. Also, in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted data is present in the transmission buffer **240a** but there is no yet-to-be-transmitted data present in the transmission buffer **240b** when confirming the transmission buffers, the transmission unit **250** transmits the data that is present. Also, in a case where there is no yet-to-be-transmitted data present in the transmission buffer **240a** but yet-to-be-transmitted data is present in the transmission buffer **240b** when confirming the transmission buffers, the transmission unit **250** transmits the data that is present.

The above-described certain quantity may be decided based on the state of the vehicle **9** in the past, processing results of onboard devices, and so forth. The above-described predetermined quantity may be decided to be, for example, an appropriate quantity greater than one worth of the data in the priority transmission buffer (e.g., a count of two or more data when expressing the quantity by a count, or a data amount that is twice or more the size of one worth when expressing the quantity by data amount), in order to avoid a situation where no data (non-priority type data) is transmitted at all from the non-priority buffer due to consecutive transmission of data (priority type data) from the priority transmission buffer in priority transmission control.

Also, the generating unit **130** of the X-ECU **100** may change the priority readout control in the reception data readout processing (step **S1**) illustrated in FIG. **10** or the reception data readout processing (step **S1a**) illustrated in FIG. **18** as follows. That is to say, the generating unit **130** repeatedly confirms the reception buffer **120a** (control system data reception buffer) and reception buffer **120b** (information system data reception buffer), and in a case where unread data is present in the control system data reception buffer and also unread data is present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming, reads out the unread data in the priority reception buffer. Also, in a case where unread data is present in the control system data reception buffer but there is no unread data present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming the reception buffers, the generating unit **130** reads out the unread data in the control system data reception buffer. Also, in a case where there is no unread data present in the control system data reception buffer but unread data is present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming the reception buffers, the generating unit **130** reads out the unread data in the information system data reception buffer.

Also, the transmission unit **150** of the X-ECU **100** may change the priority transmission control in the data transmission processing (step **S3**) illustrated in FIGS. **12** and **13** or the data transmission processing (step **S3a**) illustrated in FIGS. **19** and **13** as follows. That is to say, the transmission unit **150** repeatedly confirms the transmission buffer **140a** and transmission buffer **140b**, and in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted control system data is present in the transmission buffer **140a** and also yet-to-be-transmitted information system data is present in the transmission buffer **140b** when confirming, transmits the priority type data of the control system data and information system data. Also, in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted control system data is

present in the transmission buffer **140a** but there is no yet-to-be-transmitted information system data present in the transmission buffer **140b** when confirming the transmission buffers, the transmission unit **150** transmits the control system data. Also, in a case where there is no yet-to-be-transmitted control system data present in the transmission buffer **140a** but yet-to-be-transmitted information system data is present in the transmission buffer **140b** when confirming the transmission buffers, the transmission unit **150** transmits the information system data.

Also, the selecting unit **230** of the hub **200** may change the priority readout control in the reception data readout processing (step **S1**) illustrated in FIG. **10** or the reception data readout processing (step **S1a**) illustrated in FIG. **18** as follows. That is to say, the selecting unit **230** repeatedly confirms the reception buffer **220a** (control system data reception buffer) and reception buffer **220b** (information system data reception buffer), and in a case where unread data is present in the control system data reception buffer and also unread data is present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming, reads out the unread data in the priority reception buffer. Also, in a case where unread data is present in the control system data reception buffer but there is no unread data present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming the reception buffers, the selecting unit **230** reads out the unread data in the control system data reception buffer. Also, in a case where there is no unread data present in the control system data reception buffer but unread data is present in the information system data reception buffer when confirming the reception buffers, the selecting unit **230** reads out the unread data in the information system data reception buffer. Also, the hub **200** may perform priority transmission control where transfer of data read out from the priority reception buffer indicated by priority information (data transmission based on the data) with priority over transfer of data read out from the non-priority reception buffer.

Also, the transmission unit **250** of the hub **200** may change the priority transmission control in the data transmission processing (step **S3**) illustrated in FIGS. **12** and **13** or the data transmission processing (step **S3a**) illustrated in FIGS. **19** and **13** as follows. That is to say, the transmission unit **250** repeatedly confirms the transmission buffer **240a** and transmission buffer **240b**, and in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted data is present in the transmission buffer **240a** and also yet-to-be-transmitted data is present in the transmission buffer **240b** when confirming, transmits the data in the priority transmission buffer. Also, in a case where yet-to-be-transmitted data is present in the transmission buffer **240a** but there is no yet-to-be-transmitted data present in the transmission buffer **240b** when confirming the transmission buffers, the transmission unit **250** transmits the data that is present. Also, in a case where there is no yet-to-be-transmitted data present in the transmission buffer **240a** but yet-to-be-transmitted data is present in the transmission buffer **240b** when confirming the transmission buffers, the transmission unit **250** transmits the data that is present.

Second Embodiment

A second embodiment where the configuration of the onboard network system **10** illustrated in the first embodiment (see FIG. **2**) has been partially modified will be described below.

2.1 Configuration of Onboard Network System **10a**

FIG. **20** is a diagram illustrating a schematic configuration of an onboard network system **10a**. The hub **200** in the

onboard network system **10** illustrated in the first embodiment was connected to one CAN bus of the control system network **1**. In comparison with this, a hub **200a** which is a partial modification of the hub **200** is connected to two busses, which are the buses **30a** (CAN bus **1**) and **30b** (CAN bus **2**) in the onboard network system **10a**, as illustrated in FIG. **20**. Components of the onboard network system **10a** that are the same as those of the onboard network system **10** are denoted in FIG. **20** by the same symbols as in FIG. **2**, and description hereof will be omitted here. Note that points regarding the onboard network system **10a** that are not described in particular here are the same as with the onboard network system **10**.

C-ECUs **500a** through **500c** are connected to the bus **30a** in a control system network **1a**, and C-ECUs **500d** and **500e** are connected to the bus **30b**. The C-ECUs **500d** and **500e** respectively are a door control ECU directly connected to a door open/close sensor and a window control ECU directly connected to a window open/close sensor or the like, for example.

Besides having the functions of the hub **200**, the hub **200a** also functions as a CAN gateway, having a function of transferring a CAN frame received from one CAN bus to the other CAN bus. The C-ECUs **500a** through **500e** communicate with each other via the bus **30a**, bus **30b**, and hub **200a**, for example, and exchange frames following the CAN protocol.

The hub **200a** has the same configuration as the hub **200** illustrated in the first embodiment (see FIG. **7**). However, the degree-of-priority setting unit **260** of the hub **200a** is capable of updating the contents of priority information on the fly, in accordance with the state of the vehicle **9**. For example, the degree-of-priority setting unit **260** updates the priority information in accordance with whether the vehicle **9** is traveling or stopped, based on priority control information illustrated in FIG. **21**. Specifically, if the vehicle traveling state (traveling state of the vehicle **9**) is a traveling state, the degree of priority of the control system data reception buffer and control system data transmission buffer is raised, and if the vehicle traveling state is a stopped state, the degree of priority of the information system data reception buffer and information system data transmission buffer is raised conversely. That is to say, the priority transmission buffer is the transmission buffer **240a** (control system data transmission buffer) while the vehicle **9** is traveling, and is the transmission buffer **240b** (information system data transmission buffer) when the vehicle **9** is stopped, for example. The hub **200a** can distinguish whether the vehicle traveling state is traveling or stopped, from the contents (e.g., vehicle state data) of CAN frames received from one of the C-ECUs. In a stopped state, the vehicle speed is zero, for example. The data transfer processing by the hub **200a** is the same as the data transfer processing by the hub **200** other than the point of being performed based on priority information that is updated on the fly. (see FIG. **10** and FIGS. **12** through **15**).

Note that the hub **200a** may be connected to multiple Ethernet (registered trademark) cables as transmission paths of the information system network **2**, and may encompass functions the same as with the E-hub **400** in the first embodiment.

2.2 Communication Sequence Related to Transfer Functions of Hub **200a**

FIG. **22** illustrates an example of a communication sequence related to transfer functions of the hub **200a**. The transfer rule information that the hub **200a** stores indicates

that CAN frames of vehicle state data received from the bus **30a** should be transferred to the bus **30b** (CAN bus **2**) in this example.

Upon the vehicle **9** starting traveling, for example, the hub **200a** sets priority information at the degree-of-priority setting unit **260** so that the object of priority is control system data (step **S1021**). Accordingly, the degree of priority of the control system data reception buffer (or control system data transmission buffer) is set higher than the information system data reception buffer (or information system data transmission buffer) in the priority information.

The hub **200a** receives an E-frame containing sensor information from the information system network **2** (step **S1022**), and receives a CAN frame containing vehicle state data from the bus **30a** (CAN bus **1**), for example, of the control system network **1a** (step **S1023**). The hub **200a** then confirms the reception buffers **220a** and **220b**, and reads out vehicle state data from the reception buffer **220a** with priority. The hub **200a** selects the bus **30b** of the control system network **1a** as the destination of the vehicle state data read out from the reception buffer, and transmits a CAN frame including that vehicle state data to the bus **30b** of the control system network **1a** (step **S1024**). The hub **200a** also receives a CAN frame including vehicle state data from the bus **30a** of the control system network **1a** (step **S1025**).

The hub **200a** confirms the reception buffers **220a** and **220b**, reads out vehicle state data from the reception buffer **220a** with priority, and in the same way selects the bus **30b** of the control system network **1a** as the destination, and transmits a CAN frame including that vehicle state data to the bus **30b** of the control system network **1a** (step **S1026**).

The hub **200a** confirms the reception buffers **220a** and **220b**, and since there is no data in the reception buffer **220a**, reads out the sensor information from the reception buffer **220b**. An assumption will be made here that the transfer rule information indicates this sensor information has one device on the information system network **2** as the transmission source, and another device as a destination. The hub **200a** then selects the information system network **2** as the destination of the sensor information that has been read out, and transmits an E-frame that includes the sensor information in the payload had and the MAC address of the destination device as the destination MAC address, to the information system network **2** (step **S1027**).

2.3 Advantages of Second Embodiment

In the onboard network system **10a** according to the second embodiment, when transferring data, the hub **200a** connected to both of the first network (control system network **1a**) and second network (information system network **2**) that have different communication protocols from each other reads out data from the reception buffer from one network with priority in accordance with priority information that can be updated on the fly based on the state of the vehicle **9**, or performs transmission with priority from the transmission buffer for data of which the destination is one network. Accordingly, the order of priority for processing based on data readout or transmission processing or the like can be correlated with the importance of data transmitted over the networks. As a specific example, transmission of control system data relating to traveling control of the vehicle **9** is given priority over transmission of information system data such as image data or the like while the vehicle **9** is traveling, so a situation where transmission of information system data adversely affects safe traveling of the vehicle **9** or the like can be prevented. Conversely, when the

vehicle **9** is stopped, transmission of information system data is given priority, so information and the like that has relatively large data amounts, such as images and so forth, can be provided to the passenger (user) of the vehicle **9** without delay, and improve the comfort of the user.

In the same way as the hub **200a**, the degree-of-priority setting unit **160** may update the priority information in accordance with the state of the vehicle **9** in the X-ECU **100** as well. Accordingly, if the traveling state of the vehicle **9** on the fly is a traveling state, the degree of priority of the control system data reception buffer and control system data transmission buffer is raised in the priority information of the X-ECU **100**, and if the vehicle traveling state is a stopped state, the degree of priority of the information system data reception buffer and information system data transmission buffer is set to be raised conversely. That is to say, the priority reception buffer is the control system data reception buffer while the vehicle **9** is traveling, and is the information system data reception buffer when the vehicle **9** is stopped. Also, the priority type data is the control system data while the vehicle **9** is traveling, and is information system data while the vehicle **9** is stopped.

Other Embodiments

The first and second embodiments serving as exemplary illustrations of technology relating to the present disclosure have been described above. However, the technology relating to the present disclosure is not restricted to these, and embodiments where modification, substitution, omission, and so forth has been made as appropriate are also applicable. For example, the following modifications are also included in an embodiment of the present disclosure.

(1) The configurations of the onboard network systems **10** and **10a** illustrated in the above-described embodiments (see FIGS. **2** and **20**) are only examples, and any configuration may be made as long as it includes a first network where a first-type frame (e.g., CAN frame) relating to traveling control of a vehicle is transmitted over a bus following a first communication protocol (e.g., CAN protocol) and a second network where a second-type frame (e.g., E-frame) is transmitted following a second communication protocol (e.g., Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol) that is different from the first communication protocol. The configuration of the onboard network system may be such as modifications illustrated in FIGS. **23** through **28** (modifications **1** through **6**), for example. The same components are denoted by the same reference symbols in the drawings. An onboard network system **10b** illustrated in FIG. **23** has a configuration where the X-ECU **100** is omitted from the onboard network system **10**. Note that the E-ECU **300a** may have ADAS functions, for example. The E-ECU **300a** and C-ECUs **500a** through **500c** in the onboard network system **10b** are capable of exchanging information with each other via the hub **200**, even without corresponding to two types of communication protocols as with the X-ECU **100**. In an onboard network system **10c** illustrated in FIG. **24**, a gateway **600** does not have an interface compatible with the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol, and has functions of a CAN gateway that handles transfer of CAN frames between buses (CAN busses) **30a** and **30c** serving as transmission paths on a control system network **1b**. A hub **200b** has the function of connecting the control system network **1b** and an information system network **2a**, and relaying (transferring) data between the networks. The hub **200b** has ports (connection terminals) connected to multiple Ethernet (registered trademark) cables, and encompasses the same functions as the

hub **200** and the E-hub **400** illustrated in the first embodiment. An onboard network system **10d** illustrated in FIG. **25** primarily is equivalent to an arrangement where the control system network **1b** in the onboard network system **10c** has been replaced by the control system network **1** in the onboard network system **10**. An onboard network system **10e** illustrated in FIG. **26** is the onboard network system **10** where the information system network **2** has been replaced by a bus-type information system network **2b**. A hub **200c** is connected to the bus **30a** of the control system network **1** and a bus **20x** of the information system network **2b**, and has a function of transferring data between two networks, in the same way as the hub **200**. An X-ECU **100a** has a communication interface that is compatible with both the control system network **1** and the information system network **2b**, and is connected to the bus **30a** of the control system network **1** and the bus **20x** of the information system network **2b**. The X-ECU **100a** can receive data from both networks in the same way as the X-ECU **100**, and can transmit data to both networks. The X-ECU **100a** has communication interfaces compatible with both networks, and accordingly can exchange data more speedily than exchanging data with one of the networks via the hub **200c**. An onboard network system **10f** illustrated in FIG. **27** is an arrangement where the control system network **1** of the onboard network system **10e** has been replaced by the control system network **1b**, and the hub **200c** has been replaced by a hub **200d** connected to multiple CAN busses (buses **30a** and **30c**) of the control system network **1b**. The hub **200d** has the same functions as the hub **200c**, and functions of a CAN gateway. An onboard network system **10g** illustrated in FIG. **28** is an arrangement where the information system network **2b** in the onboard network system **10e** has been replaced by an information system network **2c**, and the hub **200c** has been replaced by a hub **200e** that connects to multiple busses (buses **20x** and **20y**) of the information system network **2b**. The hub **200e** encompasses the same functions as the hub **200c**, and frame relay functions of the information system network **2c**. Note that the external communication device **92** may be omitted from the above-described onboard network systems, and the devices (sensors, etc.) connected to the transmission path of the information system networks and C-ECUs connected to the transmission path of the control system networks may have any functions. An arrangement may be made where the network hubs (hub) in the onboard network systems, such as the E-hub **400**, hub **200b**, and so forth, do not have functions as an Ethernet (registered trademark) switch (switching hub), and at the time of transmitting E-frames, send out the E-frames onto all Ethernet (registered trademark) cables connected to the hub without distinguishing the destination MAC addresses of the E-frames. The connection state of the information system network (network topology) may be changed in the above-described onboard network systems.

(2) Although the X-ECU **100** has been described in the embodiments above as having ADAS functions, the X-ECU **100** may have other functions instead of having ADAS functions. The generating unit **130** of the X-ECU **100** may add information indicating the degree of priority of transmission to serve as a reference for priority transmission control (e.g., a numerical value indicating the degree of priority, information indicating that priority is to be given, etc.) to data stored in the transmission buffer **140a** or transmission buffer **140b**. The transmission unit **150** may perform priority transmission control, such as transmitting earlier the higher the degree of priority is, based on the degree of priority of transmission of data stored in the

buffers. The X-ECU **100** may transmit the data with information indicating this degree of priority of transmission added thereto, included in the contents of CAN frames or E-frames, and the hub **200** or the like may reference the degree of priority of transmission and perform control to transfer with priority (e.g., reading out and transmitting earlier the higher the degree of priority of transmission is, etc.), for example. The X-ECU **100** may be connected to each of the control system network and information system network via a device having gateway functions or the like (a relay device such as a hub or the like).

(3) Description has been made in the above embodiments that the onboard network system includes a first network (control system network) and a second network (information system network), with the first network transmitting CAN frames (data frames) over a CAN bus following the CAN protocol, and the second network transmitting E-frames (Ethernet (registered trademark) frames) following the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol. This CAN protocol is to be understood to have a broad meaning, encompassing derivative protocols such as CANOpen used in embedded systems within automation systems and so forth, TTCAN (Time-Triggered CAN), CANFD (CAN with Flexible Data Rate) and so forth. Data frames in the CAN protocol may be in an extended ID format, besides in the standard ID format. Ethernet (registered trademark) frames may be Ethernet (registered trademark) Version 2 frames, or may be frames stipulated by IEEE 802.3. The Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol may be understood to have a broad meaning, encompassing derivative protocols such as Ethernet (registered trademark) Audio Video Bridging (AVB) relating to IEEE 802.1, Ethernet (registered trademark) Time Sensitive Networking (TSN) relating to IEEE 802.1, Ethernet (registered trademark)/Industrial Protocol (IP), Ethernet (registered trademark) for Control Automation Technology (EtherCAT (registered trademark)), and so forth. An arrangement may be made where the first network transmits first-type frames (e.g., CAN frames or the like) following a first communication protocol, and the second network transmits second-type frames (e.g., E-frames or the like) following a second communication protocol that differs from the first communication protocol. In this case, the first communication protocol is the CAN protocol for example, but is not restricted to the CAN protocol, and may be Local Interconnect Network (LIN), Media Oriented Systems Transport (MOST (registered trademark)), FlexRay (registered trademark), and so forth. Also, the second communication protocol is the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol for example, but is not restricted to the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol, and may be a BroadR-Reach protocol, for example. According to the onboard network system having the first network and second network, information transmitted from an ECU or the like connected to the first network (e.g., C-ECU) can be transmitted to an ECU or the like connected to the second network (e.g., an E-ECU), via the above-described hub or the like, and conversely, information transmitted by an ECU or the like connected to the second network can be transmitted to an ECU or the like connected to the first network. Note that the Ethernet (registered trademark) illustrated in the above-described embodiments can transmit a great amount of data per frame as compared to CAN. With regard to this point, the second communication protocol may be various types of protocols that can transmit a great amount of data per frame as compared to the first communication protocol.

(4) The contents of CAN frames and E-frames stored in the reception buffers (reception buffers **120a**, **120b**, **220a**,

220b) illustrated in the above-described embodiments are not restricted to data (contents of the data field of CAN frames or contents of the payload of Ethernet (registered trademark) frames), and the contents may include information of any portion of CAN frames or E-frames. Data stored in transmission buffers (transmission buffers **140a**, **140b**, **240a**, **240b**) may also be data equivalent to the contents of entire CAN frames or E-frames to be transmitted. Thus, even in a case where the contents of entire CAN frames to be transmitted are stored in the transmission buffers, if an abnormality occurs at part of the CAN control system network, the transmission units **150** and **250** can construct E-frames including the contents of the CAN frames in the payload and so forth, and transmit to the information system network.

(5) The order of executing the procedures of various types of processing illustrated in the above-described embodiments (e.g., the procedures illustrated in FIGS. **9** through **19**, etc.) is not necessarily restricted to the above-described order, and the order of execution may be switched around, multiple procedures may be executed in parallel, part of the procedures may be omitted, and so forth, without departing from the essence of the disclosure.

(6) Devices in the above-described embodiments, such as hubs, E-hubs, ECUs (E-ECUs, C-ECUs, and X-ECUs), and so forth, may include other hardware components such as a hard disk device, display, keyboard, mouse, and so forth. The functions of the device may be realized through software by programs stored in memory being executed by a processor, or the functions may be realized by dedicated hardware (digital circuits or the like). Assignment of functions among the components within the device is changeable.

(7) The hubs (e.g., hub **200**, etc.) illustrated in the above-described embodiments may effect control where data that is read out from a priority reception buffer with priority is immediately transferred, by referencing information indicating the degree of priority relating to reception buffers in priority information, instead of referencing information indicating the degree of priority relating to transmission buffers, for example. That is to say, a hub connected to a bus of a first network and to a second network in an onboard network system that includes the first network where transmission of first-type frames relating to traveling control of a vehicle is performed over a bus following a first communication protocol, and the second network where transmission of second-type frames is performed following a second communication protocol that is different from the first communication protocol, includes a first reception buffer, a second reception buffer, a first reception unit that sequentially receives the first-type frames from the bus and stores data within the first-type frames in the first reception buffer, a second reception unit that sequentially receives the second-type frames from the second network and stores data within the second-type frames in the second reception buffer, a selecting unit that selects whether the destination of data read out from one of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer is the first network or the second network, and a transmission unit that transmits a frame including this data to the destination when the selecting unit selects the destination of the data, the selecting unit performing priority readout control so as to read out unread data in the priority reception buffer that is one of the first reception buffer and second reception buffer with priority over unread data in the non-priority reception buffer that is the other. According to this hub, transmission of data can be appropriately performed by priority readout control, by

appropriately setting the priority reception buffer taking the properties of the first network and the second network each into consideration.

(8) Part or all of the components configuring the devices in the above-described embodiments may be configured as a single system large scale integration (LSI). A system LSI is a super-multi-functional LSI manufactured integrating multiple components on a single chip, and specifically is a computer system configured including a microprocessor, ROM, RAM, and so forth. A computer program is recorded in the RAM. The system LSI realizes its functions by the microprocessor operating according to the computer program. The parts of the components making up the above devices may be individually formed into one chip, or part or all may be included in one chip. While description has been made regarding a system LSI, there are different names such as IC, LSI, super LSI, and ultra LSI, depending on the degree of integration. The circuit integration technique is not restricted to LSIs, and dedicated circuits or general-purpose processors may be used to realize the same. A field programmable gate array (FPGA) which can be programmed after manufacturing the LSI, or a reconfigurable processor where circuit cell connections and settings within the LSI can be reconfigured, may be used. Further, in the event of the advent of an integrated circuit technology which would replace LSIs by advance of semiconductor technology or a separate technology derived therefrom, such a technology may be used for integration of the functional blocks, as a matter of course. Application of biotechnology and so forth is a possibility.

(9) Part or all of the components of which the above-described devices are configured may be configured as an IC card detachably mountable to each device or a standalone module. The IC card or module is a computer system configured including a microprocessor, ROM, RAM, and so forth. The IC card or module may include the above-described super-multifunctional LSI. The IC card or module achieves its functions by the microprocessor operating according to the computer program. The IC card or module may be tamper-resistant.

(10) One aspect of the present disclosure may be a communication method or transfer method including all or part of the processing procedures illustrated in FIGS. 9 through 19, for example. For example, the communication method is a method used by an ECU (e.g., X-ECU 100) connected to a bus of a first network and to a second network in an onboard network system that includes the first network where transmission of first-type frames (e.g., CAN frames) relating to traveling control of a vehicle is performed over a bus following a first communication protocol (e.g., CAN), and the second network where transmission of second-type frames (e.g., E-frames) is performed following a second communication protocol (e.g., Ethernet (registered trademark)) that is different from the first communication protocol, the ECU including a first reception buffer (reception buffer 120a), a second reception buffer (reception buffer 120b), a first transmission buffer (transmission buffer 140a), and a second transmission buffer (transmission buffer 140b). The method includes a first reception step of sequentially receiving first-type frames from the bus and storing data within the first-type frames in a first reception buffer (e.g., processing by the reception unit 110a), a second reception step of sequentially receiving second-type frames from the second network and storing data within the second-type frames in a second reception buffer (e.g., processing by the reception unit 110b), a generating step of sequentially generating first-type data (e.g., control system data) that is data

for traveling control of the vehicle, and second-type data (information system data) that is data used for other than traveling control of the vehicle, by referencing the contents of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, storing the generated first-type data in the first transmission buffer, and storing the generated second-type data in the second transmission buffer (e.g., steps S1 and S2), and a transmission step of transmitting yet-to-be-transmitted first-type data in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted second-type data in the second transmission buffer (e.g., step S3). In the transmission step, priority transmission control is performed where priority type data, which is one of the first-type data and second-type data, is transmitted with priority over non-priority type data that is the other. Also, for example, the transfer method is a method used by a hub (e.g., hub 200, etc.) connected to a bus of a first network and to a second network in an onboard network system that includes the first network where transmission of first-type frames relating to traveling control of a vehicle is performed over a bus following a first communication protocol, and the second network where transmission of second-type frames is performed following a second communication protocol that is different from the first communication protocol, the hub including a first reception buffer (reception buffer 220a), a second reception buffer (reception buffer 220b), a first transmission buffer (transmission buffer 240a), and a second transmission buffer (transmission buffer 240b). The method includes a first reception step of sequentially receiving first-type frames from the bus and storing data within the first-type frames in a first reception buffer (e.g., processing by the reception unit 210a), a second reception step of sequentially receiving second-type frames from the second network and storing data within the second-type frames in a second reception buffer (e.g., processing by the reception unit 210b), a selecting step of selecting the first network or the second network as the destination of the data of that is the contents of one of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, storing the data in the first transmission buffer in a case of having selected the first network, and storing the data in the second transmission buffer in a case of having selected the second network (e.g., steps S1 and S4), and a transmission step of transmitting yet-to-be-transmitted data in the first transmission buffer and yet-to-be-transmitted data in the second transmission buffer (e.g., step S3). In the transmission step, priority transmission control is performed where yet-to-be-transmitted data in a priority transmission buffer that is one of the first transmission buffer and the second transmission buffer, is transmitted with priority over yet-to-be-transmitted data in a non-priority transmission buffer that is the other. The method may be a program (computer program) which realizes this method by a computer, or may be digital signals made up of the computer program. An aspect of the present disclosure may be the computer program or the digital signals recorded in a computer-readable recording medium, such as for example, a flexible disk, a hard disk, a CD-ROM, MO, DVD, DVD-ROM, DVD-RAM, BD (Blu-ray (registered trademark) Disc), semiconductor memory, or the like. The present disclosure may also be the digital signals recorded in these recording mediums. An aspect of the present disclosure may be an arrangement where the computer program or the digital signals are transmitted over an electric communication line, wireless or cable communication line, a network of which the Internet is representative, data broadcasting, or the like. Also, an aspect of the present disclosure may be a computer system having a microprocessor and memory, where the memory records the computer program, and the

43

microprocessor operates according to the computer program. The program or the digital signals may be recorded in the recording medium and transported, or the program or the digital signals may be transported over the network or the like, and thereby be executed by another computer system that is independent.

(11) Forms realized by optionally combining the components and functions described in the above embodiments and the above modifications are also included in the scope of the present disclosure.

The present disclosure is applicable to onboard network systems including onboard networks.

What is claimed is:

1. An electronic control unit connected to a first network and connected to a second network in an onboard network system, the onboard network system including the first network to transmit first-type frames relating to traveling control of a vehicle following a first communication protocol, and the second network to transmit second-type frames following a second communication protocol, the electronic control unit comprising:

a first reception buffer;

a second reception buffer;

a first transmission buffer;

a second transmission buffer;

a first receiver that sequentially receives the first-type frames from the first network and stores data within the first-type frames in the first reception buffer;

a second receiver that sequentially receives the second-type frames from the second network and stores data within the second-type frames in the second reception buffer;

a processor that sequentially generates first-type data that is data for traveling control of the vehicle, and second-type data that is data other than traveling control of the vehicle, by referencing the contents of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, stores the first-type data in the first transmission buffer, and stores the second-type data in the second transmission buffer; and

a transmitter that transmits the first-type data in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data in the second transmission buffer,

wherein the transmitter performs priority transmission control, where priority type data, that is one of the first-type data and the second-type data, is transmitted with priority over non-priority type data that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data.

2. The electronic control unit according to claim 1, wherein the priority type data is the first-type data, wherein, in a case where predetermined exception conditions are not satisfied, the transmitter performs transmission of the first-type data by sending the first-type frame including the first-type data to the first network, and in a case where the exception conditions are satisfied, performs transmission of the first-type data by sending the second-type frame including the first-type data to the second network,

and wherein the transmitter performs transmission of the second-type data by sending the second-type frame including the second-type data to the second network.

3. The electronic control unit according to claim 2, wherein the predetermined exception conditions are conditions that are satisfied when an abnormality is detected in a part of the first network.

44

4. The electronic control unit according to claim 1, wherein the transmitter performs the priority transmission control by

repeatedly confirming the first transmission buffer and the second transmission buffer,

transmitting the priority type data in a case where the first-type data is in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming,

transmitting the first-type data in a case where the first-type data is in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data is not in the second transmission buffer during the confirming, and

transmitting the second-type data in a case where the first-type data is not in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming.

5. The electronic control unit according to claim 1, wherein the transmitter performs the priority transmission control by

repeatedly confirming the first transmission buffer and the second transmission buffer,

transmitting a predetermined quantity of the priority type data, and thereafter transmitting one of the non-priority type data, in a case where the first-type data is in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming,

transmitting the first-type data in a case where the first-type data is in the first transmission buffer but the second-type data is not in the second transmission buffer during the confirming, and

transmitting the second-type data in a case where the first-type data is not in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming.

6. The electronic control unit according to claim 5, wherein the predetermined quantity of the priority type data is a predetermined multiple of one of the non-priority type data.

7. The electronic control unit according to claim 1, wherein the transmitter performs the priority transmission control by

repeatedly confirming the first transmission buffer and the second transmission buffer,

transmitting the priority type data when non-transmission time of the non-priority data does not exceed a predetermined threshold value, and transmitting the non-priority type data when non-transmission time exceeds the predetermined threshold value, in a case where the first-type data is in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming,

transmitting the first-type data in a case where the first-type data is in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data is not in the second transmission buffer during the confirming, and

transmitting the second-type data in a case where the first-type data is not in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data is in the second transmission buffer during the confirming.

8. The electronic control unit according to claim 7, wherein the priority reception buffer is the first reception buffer while the vehicle is traveling, and is the second reception buffer while the vehicle is stopped.

9. The electronic control unit according to claim 1, wherein the processor generates first-type data as a result of processing based on data relating to the first-type

45

frame read from the first reception buffer, and generates second-type data as a result of processing based on data relating to the second-type frame read from the second reception buffer,

and wherein the processor performs priority readout control where contents of a priority reception buffer that is one of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer is read with priority over contents of a non-priority reception buffer that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data.

10. The electronic control unit according to claim 9, wherein the processor performs the priority readout control by

repeatedly confirming the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer,

reading data in the priority reception buffer in a case where data is in the first reception buffer and data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming, reading data in the first reception buffer in a case where data is in the first reception buffer and data is not in the second reception buffer during the confirming, and

reading the data in the second reception buffer in a case where data is not in the first reception buffer but data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming.

11. The electronic control unit according to claim 9, wherein the processor performs the priority readout control by

repeatedly confirming the first transmission buffer and the second transmission buffer,

reading a predetermined quantity of data in the priority reception buffer, and thereafter reading one data in the non-priority reception buffer, in a case where data is in the first reception buffer and data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming,

reading data in the first reception buffer in a case where data is in the first reception buffer and data is not in the second reception buffer during the confirming, and

reading the data in the second reception buffer in a case where data is not in the first reception buffer but data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming.

12. The electronic control unit according to claim 11, wherein the predetermined quantity of the data in the priority reception buffer is a predetermined multiple of the one data in the non-priority reception buffer.

13. The electronic control unit according to claim 9, wherein the processor performs the priority readout control by

repeatedly confirming the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer,

reading data in the priority reception buffer when unread time of data in the non-priority reception buffer does not exceed a certain threshold value, and reading data in the non-priority reception buffer when unread time exceeds the certain threshold value, in a case where data is in the first reception buffer and data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming,

reading data in the first reception buffer in a case where data is in the first reception buffer but data is not in the second reception buffer during the confirming, and

46

reading the data in the second reception buffer in a case where data is not in the first reception buffer but data is in the second reception buffer during the confirming.

14. The electronic control unit according to claim 1, wherein the first communication protocol is the Controller Area Network (CAN) protocol, wherein the second communication protocol is the Ethernet (registered trademark) protocol, wherein the first-type frame is a data frame, and wherein the second-type frame is an Ethernet (registered trademark) frame.

15. The electronic control unit according to claim 1, wherein a maximum data amount of the second-type frame following the second communication protocol is greater than a maximum data amount of the first-type frame following the first communication protocol.

16. The electronic control unit according to claim 1, wherein the priority type data is the first-type data while the vehicle is traveling, and is the second-type data while the vehicle is stopped.

17. A communication method for an electronic control unit connected to a first network and connected to a second network in an onboard network system, the onboard network system including the first network to transmit first-type frames relating to traveling control of a vehicle following a first communication protocol, and the second network to transmit second-type frames following a second communication protocol, the electronic control unit including a first reception buffer, a second reception buffer, a first transmission buffer, and a second transmission buffer, the communication method comprising:

sequentially receiving the first-type frames from the first network and storing first stored data within the first-type frames in the first reception buffer;

sequentially receiving the second-type frames from the second network and storing second stored data within the second-type frames in the second reception buffer; sequentially generating first-type data that is data for traveling control of the vehicle, and second-type data that is data other than traveling control of the vehicle, by referencing the contents of the first reception buffer and the second reception buffer, storing the first-type data in the first transmission buffer, and storing the second-type data in the second transmission buffer; and transmitting the first-type data in the first transmission buffer and the second-type data in the second transmission buffer,

wherein, in the transmitting, priority transmission control is performed where priority type data, that is one of the first-type data and the second-type data, is transmitted with priority over non-priority type data that is another of the first-type data and the second-type data.

18. An onboard network system comprising:

a first network to transmit first-type frames relating to traveling control of a vehicle following a first communication protocol;

a second network to transmit second-type frames following a second communication protocol;

a first electronic control unit connected to the first network; a second electronic control unit connected to the second network; and

a third electronic control unit connected to the first network and the second network,

wherein the third electronic control unit comprises:

a first reception buffer,

a second reception buffer,

a first transmission buffer,
a second transmission buffer,
a first receiver that sequentially receives the first-type
frames from the first network and stores first stored
data within the first-type frames in the first reception 5
buffer,
a second receiver that sequentially receives the second-
type frames from the second network and stores
second stored data within the second-type frames in
the second reception buffer, 10
a processor that sequentially generates first-type data
that is data for traveling control of the vehicle, and
second-type data that is data other than traveling
control of the vehicle, by referencing the contents of
the first reception buffer and the second reception 15
buffer, stores the first-type data in the first transmis-
sion buffer, and stores the second-type data in the
second transmission buffer, and
a transmitter that transmits the first-type data in the first
transmission buffer and the second-type data in the 20
second transmission buffer,
wherein the transmitter performs priority transmission
control, where priority type data, that is one of the
first-type data and the second-type data, is transmitted
with priority over non-priority type data that is another 25
of the first-type data and the second-type data.

* * * * *